EXPLORING POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: WHO CONTROLS INDONESIA'S *SATGAS PARPOL*?

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Table of Contents:

Acknowledgements i
Table of Contents: ii
Summary iii
List of Tables vi
List of Illustrations vi
Introduction 2
Literature Review 7
Chapter 1: Violent Contentious Politics, their Causes and Characteristics 14
Low Level Political Violence 14
Structural Prerequisites for Low-level Political Violence 15
Characteristics of Political Violence in Thailand and the Philippines 33
Proximate Causes of Political Violence in Indonesia 42
Chapter 2: Political Militias in Indonesia, 1945 – 1998 51
Political Paramilitaries, 1950 - 1965 68
Political Violence for and against the New Order, 1965-1997 75
A Short Case Study: Pemuda Pancasila 102
May 1998, the End of Suharto 104
Chapter 3: A Focus on Yogyakarta, 1999 – 2004 107
Overview of National Politics 107
The 1999 and 2004 Elections in Yogyakarta 112
Chapter 4: Yogyakarta's Satgas Speak 131
Conclusion 166
Appendix A: Glossary 176
Bibliography 177

Summary

In Indonesia, each political party has a "security task force" charged with protecting party members, ensuring orderly meetings, and providing security and logistics at gatherings. However, these *satgas parpol* are associated more with intimidation, militarism, and carrying weapons than with ensuring the peace. This thesis explains the role of satgas parpol through a historical perspective. It also examines how that role has changed in Yogyakarta since 1998.

Chapter one discusses other cases of political violence in the Philippines and Thailand to assemble a list of prerequisites for political violence within Southeast Asia. By comparing *satgas parpol* with groups in the Philippines and Thailand, I argue that the prerequisites for the violence are the same in all three countries: a state that cannot or will not stop political violence, sponsors who buy and use thugs, and young men willing to take employment as thugs. In the three countries, the organizations and sponsors are different, but the structure is the same. Having constructed a theoretical framework, the thesis looks more closely at political party militias in Indonesia.

The next chapter discusses the history of the relationship among *satgas parpol*, the political parties, and the state, and *satgas parpol* since Reformasi in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. *Satgas Parpol* originated in Revolutionary era militias. These early militiamen were a mix of opportunists and idealists; but almost all were young. The legacy of these militiamen was a "youth consciousness" among Indonesian young

people, characterized by the youths' belief in their duty to involve themselves in politics, with violence if necessary. This youth consciousness explains much of the appeal of *satgas parpol* membership and organizational élan.

The sometimes violent thuggery of *satgas parpol* is also due to the repressive political climate of Suharto's Indonesia (1965 – 1998). During this time, the government allowed no political debate and no criticism. Thus, to Indonesians of the 1960s, 70s, 80s, and 90s, politics were a dangerous activity. The *satgas parpol* of the emasculated opposition parties saw themselves as brave patriots fighting a dangerous battle against bad government.

The third chapter shows that since 1998 in Yogyakarta, *satgas parpol* are much less violent than in the rest of the country. This is due to Yogyakarta's special political climate characterized by the Sultanate, the Universities and civil society.

The fourth chapter shows that satgas leaders in Yogyakarta have made serious efforts to end violence in their city, but that problems with weapons-carrying and thuggery still exist.

This thesis concludes that for each party, the satgas are commanded differently; some are under the control of parties, some are not. However, they will not be disbanded, but they may become simple logistics committees or an ornamental honor guard, not real security. Furthermore, politicking in the Philippines and Thailand show us that

elections in newer Southeast Asian democracies need not be violent; in fact, politicking in Indonesia should become more money-based as time goes on.

List of Tables

Table 1: Prerequisites of Political Violence in Southeast Asia 32
Table 2: 1999 and 2004 Indonesian Parliamentary Election Results 127
Table 3: Levels of Local Government in Indonesia 175

List of Illustrations

Illustration 1: Maps of Indonesia and Yogyakarta……..…….……....1
Illustration 2: Satgas PPP at the funeral of Moses Gatutkaca…….……147
Illustration 3: Satgas PPP's New Motto…….……...148
Illustration 4: PDI-P Satgas in Surabaya, June 6, 2003……159
Illustration 5: A happy voter……..165
Illustration 6: Kids at a polling station……...……..165
Illustration 7: Post-Election headline……...……173

Illustration 1: Maps of Indonesia and Yogyakarta

Introduction

Imagine this scene: the Indonesian city of Yogyakarta, 1999, in the heady, early days of the Reformasi movement that had just kicked an aging, corrupt, autocratic Suharto out of office after 33 years. At an intersection along Jalan Malioboro, a busy shopping street for locals and tourists, there's some kind of gathering with music, lights and cooking. A group of activists espousing liberal causes such as homeless persons' rights and anti-militarism are having an all-night rally. They're cooking, listening to music, networking, and collecting clothes for distribution to the poor. In the dark of night, a bright light swings across the crowd. The activists hear a vehicle engine. A car turns toward them and speeds at the crowd. People run, and the car slams into their cooking braziers, knocking them down, and starting a fire that ruins everything at the rally: banners, clothes, musical instruments, papers, everything. No one is injured or killed, but the rally is over and the activists have been scared.

The next day, an account appears in the newspaper (*Jawa Pos,* May 20, 1999). The rally's ruin was no accident. In fact, someone quite openly takes responsibility for it: the head of security for a political party, the PPP. The man, Syarif Hidayat, says he had his men attack the rally because area residents complained of the noise and the sidewalks being blocked. He felt responsible for ensuring peace in the neighborhood.

People like Hidayat are members of groups called *satgas parpol*. It means "political party task forces" and comes from Indonesian *SAtuan Tugas PARtai POLitik*. Semantically, "satgas" is a slightly negative word; it means "task force". *Satgas*

Gegana is the anti-terrorist unit of the police, for example. The armed separatists of Irian Jaya are often called "satgas" by their opponents[1].

Each political party in Indonesia employs one or more satgas. They are generally not organized nationally very well; their members tend to be men with local concerns. Satgas are not party *armies*; they are not organized or disciplined enough to be compared to an army. It is better to characterize them as bands of paramilitaries that work for a political party. Generally, they wear matching fatigues, berets and boots, in military style. Their job is to provide security. This may mean crowd or traffic control at political rallies or body guarding candidates. However, as we see in the example above, their actions go far beyond logistics.

Satgas have been noted for their use of intimidation, violence, or coercion to control political behavior or political events in public. Their methods can include simple exhortation, but may also include battery, arson, threats, stone-throwing, and extortion. Usually their practices do not include outright murder or assassination, though accidental deaths are common. They also may use martial arts or generally have some small arms among them, such as machetes or knives.

To get a better idea of what satgas do, it's best to have some examples from the area under study: Yogyakarta. First, during the 1999 and 2004 elections, excessive street campaigning was to be outlawed and parties were to have followed strict

[1] Throughout the paper, I will use "satgas" for "satgas parpol" when the context is clear.

campaigning schedules so as to minimize their chance of conflict. For example, when cadres of different parties accidentally (or purposely) meet each other campaigning, they can sometimes pick fights with each other and cause injuries (Chew, 1999; Reuters June 1, 1999). Apparently just the sight of another party's t-shirts at one's campaign rally can cause a fight. Or being alone in the wrong neighborhood can earn a beating (*KR* May 19, 1999). In March 1999, a 16-year-old Megawati supporter who strayed into the wrong neighborhood in Yogyakarta was beaten to death (Shari 1999). These are not security guards; obviously there is more to what the satgas do.

In 1999, Indonesia's president was elected by parliament, and the parliament elected Abdurrahman Wahid, rather than Megawati, the candidate whose party got the most votes. On that day, October 20, 1999, Megawati supporters broke into riots all over the country. In Yogyakarta, a house belonging the Speaker of Parliament was set on fire (England 1999), presumably because they felt the presidential result was inappropriate and the Speaker had not done enough for their candidate. To stir up more trouble for their opponents, cadres of one party sometimes put on t-shirts of another party and 'run amok'; and can get beaten up when they are found out (*Kedaulatan Rakyat [KR]* June 4, 1999). This kind of impersonation leads to more violence when the offended party is not satisfied. Satgas of one party, for example, will claim that they will "catch the provocateurs themselves" if the police are "unable" to capture them (*KR* January 1, 2000). Satgas are willing to take the law into their own hands.

The satgas are quite uncontrollable; they take sides in inter-party politics and fight for their faction. So, satgas parpol do not just fight other parties' satgas. They fight among themselves. In March 2001 in Yogyakarta, the PDI-P held an internal election for a local branch chairman (*Tempo* July 15, 2002). Voting irregularities were alleged. The party satgas, supporting the loser, at first, peacefully, appealed to officials in Jakarta for clarification. Yogyakarta party officials then called a meeting, and forced the satgas leader to come. At the meeting he was "mobbed" to death by another faction of satgas for supporting the wrong faction (*Tempo* March 26, 2001). Whether the Yogya PDI-P officials actually meant to kill the satgas leader or just beat him is unclear.

Furthermore, known gangsters have lead at least two of the parties' satgas. Yorrys Raweyai, a man accused of running illegal gambling and smuggling rings and torturing a man to death in 1993 was the head of a Golkar-related satgas, *Pemuda Pancasila* for many years during the 1990s. Perhaps the Golkar connection was why he was arraigned but never convicted. In 2000, Megawati appointed Eurico Guiterres head of her party's youth wing, the *Banten Pemuda*. Guiterres is a Timorese convicted for leading anti-independence militias into East Timor from the West and assisting the Indonesian army with its 1999 massacre there.

In my interviews with satgas leaders in Yogyakarta (Yogyakarta and Kotagede, 2004), they all claim that they do keep the peace primarily, and that their positive

efforts are unseen and unrecognized. Wagstaff (1999) gives an example of satgas in Ujung Pandang stopping a clash between the police and an anti-Golkar mob. However, Wagstaff's example is a bit disingenuous because satgas started the trouble that brought the mob into the street. The point is, however, that satgas have a very negative image. No one says they like satgas, not even the parties that use them. They are seen as thugs, hoodlums and even murderers.

Local satgas leaders, however, know that elections are partially a festival, a party atmosphere, a *pesta demokrasi*, as it is known in Indonesian. One of the Yogya satgas leaders told me that it is granted that young people will take to the streets and fight if they are very dissatisfied with the political situation (Arief, Yogyakarta: July 2004). He said that satgas must deal with that reality and just try to keep young people as calm as possible.

In these examples, we see some interesting characteristics of the satgas. Clearly, they are not just private security guards. They feel they should do the work that many people associate with the state, with police: i.e. quieting rallies. However, they go beyond that, sometimes enforcing some kind of law of their own, for the benefit of their political party. Then, there is the use of low level violence, running a car through the rally, threatening beatings, ransacking offices. These are not proper methods for police or private security. These are the methods of organized crime and thugs, not to mention deaths, accidental or not.

In my study of satgas, I have three aims. First, I want to explore the origins and history of these groups. Satgas in specific periods of time have been studied, but I have not yet seen a comprehensive story of the evolution of satgas, save Ryter's (1998) case study of Pemuda Pancasila. So I will investigate the origins of satgas parpol.

Second, I want to understand why parties have satgas. Pundits and citizens of Reformasi Indonesia regularly call for satgas to be disbanded (*JP* November 12, 2002; Ibid, April 12, 2001). However, the parties always decline to do so. I will inquire if parties are unwilling or *unable* to disband the satgas.

Third, I want to study the changes in the satgas especially since Reformasi. As of 2004, when I interviewed satgas leaders, they said that post-Reformasi satgas must give up violence and mend their public image. To that end, the satgas are initiating reforms of their own organizations aimed at "socializing" their members.

Literature Review

To understand the prerequisites of this political violence, it is useful to compare Indonesia to two of its neighbors in the region, Thailand and the Philippines, as well as studying literature on Indonesia itself.

Political thuggery is not unique to Indonesia. In Southeast Asia, satgas are comparable to the *chao pho* (godfathers) of Thailand and the anti-Communist militias

of 1980s Philippines. For analysis of chao pho, I relied on Ruth McVey's work. Her 2000 book discussing the subject is *Of Greed, Violence, and Other Signs of Progress*. In the introduction, she argues that though elections in Thailand are rife with vote buying and voter intimidation, the violence is becoming more and more limited to the gangsters who are supposed to deliver the votes, and the voters themselves are increasingly being wooed by money rather than threats. If elections are not going to be decided on evaluation of issues, it is, indeed, progress if elections can at least deliver some financial relief to the people. Daniel Arghiros' 2001 study of grass-roots politics in a Thai province and Mulder's 1994 treatise on Thai political values provided concrete examples of vote-obtaining practices. In the Philippines, reports from Human Rights Watch (1990) and the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (1988) provided in shocking detail the ways in which anti-Communist vigilantes in the Philippines killed, threatened and were funded and recruited. Kerkvliet and Mojares' (1991) study of two communities outside of Manilia detailed political interaction in the community level.

Collins' (2002) short but excellent analysis of violence in Indonesia blames Indonesia's "New Order" (*Orde Baru, "Orba"*[2]*)* government of 1965 to 1998 for creating the conditions for political violence which continue today. Use of paramilitaries by the authorities, the role of paramilitaries in the republic's history (played up by Orba), and Orba's failed justice and enforcement systems created the conflictual atmosphere that we unfortunately see in some parts of Indonesia today.

For the background of violent politics in Indonesia since the Revolution, several authors provide excellent reportage and analysis. For the revolutionary period, Kahin (1952), Cribb (1991), Lucas (1991), and Anderson (1972) have written about different areas of Java and the independent militias during that time. All authors comment on the role of younger people in these militias and their sense that they, the militant youth, played a special role in the Revolution. Anderson coined the phrase "pemuda [youth] consciousness" to describe this sense of élan.

Moving from the Revolution to the 1960s and 1970s, Leo Suryadinata (1982, 1998) and Daniel Lev (1966) provide political analysis. Several other scholars such as Ward (1974), Utrecht (1980), van Dijk (1977), and Hering and Willis (1973) documented Orba elections.

Moving into the 1980s and 1990s, some scholars began to look at the mechanisms of violence in Orba Indonesia. Sidel's (1995) study of Jakarta and Robinson's (1995) study of Bali discuss exactly how private militias in those areas worked for and against the Indonesian state. Van der Kroef (1985) wrote an early analysis of the "mysterious killings" of criminals by criminals in 1982 and 1983. Ryter also incorporates analysis of the "mysterious killings" in her article on her case study of the history of one satgas parpol. Furthermore, studies of "urban kampongs" – small

[2] Throughout this thesis, as Indonesians do, I will use "Orba" to refer to the Indonesian government of Suharto, from 1965 until 1998.

neighborhood wards within a city – undertaken in Yogya by Sullivan (1992) and Guinness (1986) help to explain everyday political interactions in a city.

After Orba, Nordholt (2004), Hadiz (2003), and van Dijk (2004) have written about the continuities of violence even after Reformasi. Bertrand emphasizes that the proliferation of private security groups in Indonesia and the problems with the national police has led to a blurring between the two groups, and the growth of a class of "professional enforcers" who can work on either side of the law. However, these studies are a bit general; they do not focus on satgas parpol per se.

Very little work has yet been done on post-Reformasi satgas beyond reportage. However, Philip King, an Australian academic, wrote a short article in *Inside Indonesia* (2003) discussing how satgas affected the 1999 national elections; he looked at Yogya as a case study.

Methodology

To answer my research questions, I used the secondary sources listed above as well as memoirs, newspapers, NGO reports, novels, and primary sources in my research. Foreign papers and wire services such as the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (*FEER)* and the Agence France-Presse (AFP) are indispensable for the Orba period when Indonesian papers were highly censored. After Orba, I was able to consult Indonesian national papers such as *Tempo*, the *Jakarta Post (JP),* and *Kompas.* I also

used local papers such as the *Jawa Pos (Jawa), Suara Merdeka (SM), Suara Pembaruan (SP)*, and two Yogya Papers, the *Kedaulatan Rakyat (KR)*, and *Bernas*.

Furthermore, I undertook fieldwork in Yogyakarta, Indonesia (see maps, p. 1) in June 2004, during the first round of Indonesia's presidential election. Yogya is a medium city, with only about 400,000 residents in the city, on the south coast of the densely populated island of Java. Contacts at Gadjah Mada University were able to introduce me to local satgas leaders and a police representative for interviews. Furthermore, as a large population center, Yogya was a mandatory stop on all presidential candidates' campaigns. And when the candidates come for a visit, supporters and satgas come out too.

Thus, I spoke with the informants with whom the organizations wanted me to speak – their spokesmen. Indeed, at each interview, I was faced with well-spoken, well-educated leaders. Some were even used to press interviews. I asked them about the histories of their organizations, their activities, the difference between their role during Suharto's era and now, and the differences between the 1999 and 2004 elections. They were uniformly friendly, down-to-earth, and likable. They explained away their bad reputation as actions of a few wild cadres.

However, from newspapers and simply talking to other Indonesians, I saw the other face of the satgas. Indonesians spoke of traffic jams, young men in uniforms, noise and fright. They believe the satgas are all thugs and petty criminals at least. This

certainly has some truth. They believe that all satgas always carry weapons. Certainly many carry weapons (*KR* March 7, 2000). Ordinary Indonesians want to stay out of the street when these wild people are having campaign rallies. No one wants to risk getting caught in a violent situation. The press and the public almost universally abhor the satgas.

I had also hoped to observe campaigning in Yogya, but I never saw any. Street rallies or large public gatherings were only allowed on the weekends. Furthermore, campaigning was scheduled so that each party would have a different week for campaigning in each region, and one week of my fieldwork fell during the campaigning week of the PPP, reputedly the most violent party in the country. However, they were doing so badly in the polls, they cancelled campaign activities. I did, however, happen to visit Bataam, a small city of immigrants in Riau, during the parliamentary campaigning and saw trucks full of wild supporters and decorated cars – that truly looked like the *pesta demokrasi*.

Thesis Structure

Chapter one will discuss the prerequisites of violence in Southeast Asia. In other words, I will explain that this violence is able to happen at the intersection of elite sponsorship, (young) men willing or forced to work as thugs, and a state that is unable or unwilling to control the violence. These points were drawn from a comparison of the Philippines and Thailand with Indonesia. Furthermore I will discuss the general characteristics of the violence and its proximate manifestations in Indonesia. Chapter two will explore the history of political militias and paramilitary

toughs in Indonesia from the Revolution until 1998. Chapter three focuses on the site of my fieldwork, Yogyakarta, and the violence and political parties there. Chapter four gives the results of my fieldwork – highlights from my interviews, and an analysis of how satgas seem to have changed between Orba and 2004, and why parties use them. The last chapter draws together all the threads of my research to answer my three research aims, and offers a few predictions and reflections.

Chapter 1: Violent Contentious Politics, their Causes and Characteristics

Introduction

One can find many explanations for political violence in Indonesia. I will introduce the concept of political violence, its causes and it characteristics. I will use a comparative analysis to examine the structural prerequisites of political violence. The Indonesian case shares some characteristics with other countries, especially in Southeast Asia. So, I will compare low-level electoral violence in Thailand and the Philippines in order to point out the similarities which we will see with Indonesia. However, in Indonesia, political violence has its own proximate causes which will be discussed in the last part of this chapter.

Low Level Political Violence

In most political systems, there is competition for power, in a broad sense. In parliamentary democracies, parties broadcast their fight with each other for political power. Even within authoritarian systems, different factions struggle for control, though the machinations may be kept quiet, within palace walls.

In political systems featuring contention for power, we see that sometimes this contention can lead to violence. By "violence" I mean anything from intimidation, through destruction of property, beatings, assassinations, or outright rebellion. This is a wide definition, and under it we see that just about every place in the world

experiences or has experienced some violence due to political competition becoming too fierce.

Indonesia shoulders a bad reputation for politically-motivated violence. Outsiders assume that all of Indonesia is a dangerous place riven by fighting and somehow dominated by wild people in the street or leaders with no sense. That is what we see on CNN, but of course it is not the truth. While Indonesia has some problems, it is not unique in the world for this, much less is it unique in Southeast Asia.

This thesis will focus on the lower end of the spectrum of violence, what I will refer to as low-level violence. I wish to understand the agents of and motivation for this low-level violence. In Indonesia, this takes the form of street brawls, rowdy demonstrations, intimidation, and attacks on the private property of, or threats against, one's opposing partisan. It is always done in groups. This violence does not engulf whole cities. It is not nationally organized as an armed rebellion of any sort. And, it is spurred by social or economic, rather than ideological, motives.

Structural Prerequisites for Low-level Political Violence

Looking at instances of low-level political violence, I notice three factors which are conducive to this violence: first, an open political arena; second, significant numbers of citizens who feel marginalized or disenfranchised; third, sponsors to organize and fund the violence. I believe that the confluence of all three of these factors increases a country's chance of experiencing low-level political violence. This list is likely not

complete for all situations, and I doubt all cases could easily be fit into this scheme. I especially think that the third condition, a financial sponsor for the violence, may be specific to Southeast Asia. Nonetheless, I think these three factors are important to the discussion of political violence, and certainly are critical in the Indonesian case. Therefore, I will first discuss examples of these three factors and how they contribute to political violence.

This framework of prerequisites owes much to Collins' 2002 essay on violence in Indonesia. She discusses all forms of public violence, including religious and ethnic fighting. She believes that there are four structural causes of this violence: the failure of the judicial system under Suharto's regime, paramilitary youth traditions, the use of paramilitaries by the military, and suppressive labor policies (Collins 2002: 584). The first three problems contribute to political violence, but the last refers to class-based violence. Her point is fine, but refers strictly to class-based violence; I do not think low-level political violence as I am studying is based on class struggle. Her first three points relate more to political violence: a state that cannot or does not enforce its laws, un- or under- employed people willing to work as thugs, and sponsors organizing paramilitary groups. I believe that these three factors may be a framework for explaining political violence in many countries.

Before moving on, it is important first to rebut the vague argument that Indonesia simply has a "culture of violence". Collins (2002: 582) blames political parties and elite patrons for the twin problems of violence and insinuations of a "culture of

violence". For example, "paramilitary youth groups sponsored by political elites tend to avoid responsibility by pointing to an 'Indonesian culture of violence'. The use of paramilitary groups also threatens the security of ordinary citizens, who become fearful of political engagement" (Collins 2002: 604). This is a perfect indictment of the motives of the sponsors. Elites, such as generals and politicians blame problems on culture so as to win support for their own hard-line or reactionary policies. They let trouble happen, or even encourage trouble, so as to be the one to solve it. So, it is important to rebut the idea that Indonesia has a violent culture. Instead, sponsors of violence are using that particular argument to shore up their own positions. Now, let us look at some of the structural prerequisites of political violence.

Admission into the Political Arena

Publicly contentious politics grow in a place either where they are embraced, such as in liberal democracies, or in countries that may not want contention but are not strong enough to control them, such as in weak states. To illustrate this, imagine the political "arena" as an actual arena. Some states open the doors to the public, to anyone who wants to participate, there is space for everyone. Some governments have strictly controlled admission; one has to be invited in, or buy an expensive ticket. Some arenas are very small, once a few are inside, the doors are closed. Or, most interestingly, sometimes, when the management or his security guards are incompetent, people break into the arena and change the rules. They literally seize political space. The point is that a state will not have political violence if its arena is very small, or has very few visitors. Some states feel that political violence may be a

problem, so they curb it by having a small arena and shutting people out of it. Under those regimes, there is so little political space that the people are uninterested in or barred from politics. In those regimes, there is no political violence.

However, once the arena is open to more people, or if the people push their way in, sometimes these contentious politics can spawn some violence. As in my first example: 1991 Hungary.

After the fall of the authoritarian Communist regime in Hungary, civil and political society was suddenly free from state control. People could organize for any cause and reason they saw fit. Indeed, in the first few years after the end of Communism, Hungarians witnessed the blooming of many parties and groups that have not survived until today. One such luckily long-gone group was the "Nationalist Youth Association" (NIS) of Hungary (Kürti 2003).

The NIS was the youth wing of an ultra-nationalist, racist, and neo-fascist political party called the "Hungarian People's Welfare Association". Under the previous authoritarian regime, such opinions would have been banned, as it were. And the generally unemployed and disaffected youths who filled the ranks of the NIS would have had to find some alternate, state-sanctioned passe-temps. But as it was, this nationalist party aired its hateful opinions, blaming Hungary's problems on Jews and Roma; extolling some Nazi-propaganda-esque past that they had dreamed up. And the NIS members got involved in defacing property and brawling in the streets with

other parties' members. When not involved in political activities, the NIS members often involved themselves in petty crime and in offering security and bodyguard services. In general, they were thugs, who, in a freer political climate were able to meet each other, find solace in others of like political mind, and also work for their sustenance together. This free association could never happen in an authoritarian regime.

So we see that, perversely, one precondition to low-level political violence is some degree of political freedom. This is not an argument against political freedom; we cannot punish all people for the misdeeds of one; we cannot plough under the garden just because of one weed. No, it is only to say that low-level political violence must have some free soil in which to grow; it cannot spring from a barren rock. In the Indonesian case we will see that the germination, and later the growth of satgas parpol is related to the times when Suharto or some of his cronies allowed them some space.

Marginalized or Disenfranchised people

One of Kürti's important observations about the NIS was that the members were all young, had some education and skills but were mostly unemployed; hence they were disaffected, felt marginalized and had little prospect of remunerative employment. These are the people most likely to get involved with political violence: those getting nothing from their current system. Obviously, disaffection is a major cause of rebellion, but by "disenfranchised or marginalized people" in this context, I mean the

actual existence of numerous young, unemployed but savvy men (so far I have not heard of a female involved in this) who feel desperate enough for employment that they are willing to be the foot soldiers of a cause, and brawling in the street.

Let us look at Sri Lanka to demonstrate marginalization leading to political violence. Sri Lanka is a case of rather extreme political violence, but still it is an illustrative case. I am not going to discuss the Tamil – Sinhalese divide in Sri Lanka. Rather, I will look at a somewhat lesser known struggle: that of a coalition of vernacular-speaking Sinhalese from southern Sri Lanka and their contention with the central government in Colombo. Coomaraswamy (1996) argues that these vernacular-speaking Sinhalese in Sri Lanka, felt so isolated from decision-making that they began a violent chapter in their political struggle with the center.

When Britain left Sri Lanka, it left its former colony with a new parliamentary system. While the system has undergone some changes and not always run smoothly, Sri Lanka has always been a relatively open society in terms of political space. In Sri Lanka, the majority ethnic-religious group is the Buddhist Sinhalese. The country is divided by civil war, completely excluding Hindu Tamils from the central government. Thus, the national government is controlled by an elite of English-educated Sinhalese based in Colombo. However, government employment practices, university places, and commercial success came to be dependent on a good grasp of English, which alienated many vernacular-educated Sinhalese from southern Sri Lanka. When lobbying the government for fairer employment and educational

practices, for more funds for English education and other requests did not work, some Sinhalese youth favored violence against the government. The youths behind the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP, "Peoples' Liberation Front") in the 1980s, were generally among the best educated in their communities. However, they had little chance for wider success in the country because of the English language policies. They felt marginalized so much that they were willing to fight for a cause. If everyone in a country is middle-class, well fed, and feels they have a chance to improve their lot, they will not fight. However, those who are unsatisfied are those who are on the street.

Indeed Neher and Marlay (1995: 8) note further that the widening gap between rich & poor of course fuels class-hatred. The have-nots feel shut out of a system that enriches others disproportionably. I can see that looting a store or attacking a rich man's house could be cathartic. However, this political violence under discussion is not primarily class based, because it is mostly employed against members of one's own class, rather than against elites' property. Besides this, Guinness (1986) and Sullivan (1994) both noted in their studies of Yogya working class kampungs a lack of class consciousness. Thus I do not agree that class feeling incites political violence. Though property damage can occur, it tends to be state or party-owned or affiliated properties.

A Sponsor

Thus far, in my examples on Hungary and Sri Lanka, the people fighting are fighting vaguely for an ideology, but in many cases, especially in Southeast Asia, ideology shares space with other factors in political thinking. Southeast Asian politics are often characterized by personality-based parties rather than ideology-based ones. In this work, I will not focus on ideology; I will simply say that politics are more than ideology. Public personalities are of great importance for winning votes or legitimacy in Southeast Asia. *Durga/Umaya*, a novel by Indonesian author Y.B. Mangunwijaya (2004) describes the Indonesian people's love for Suharto himself, not necessarily his policies. Plenty of stories abound about people feeling an affinity for Sukarno that they could never feel for Suharto. Further examples of personality-based politics are also seen in some of the female leaders of Southeast Asian politics. Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma, Megawati of Indonesia, and Corazon Aquino of the Philippines all owe at least some of their success to deceased male family members with whom they are believed to have an affinity. These women have individual merits and demerits of their own, but they also owe a part of their rise to the other heroic politicians with whom they are associated in the public mind.

These personality-driven politics, when they spawn violence, are different from the cases already discussed; the people may be fighting for pay, because of allegiance owed to a "patron" or a "boss", but generally, they are not fighting for an ideology. Before we move into the discussion of Southeast Asia proper, I want to discuss two

examples of fighting not for ideology from two states somewhat similar to Southeast Asia: India and Sri Lanka.

India, like Sri Lanka, has a relatively open political space and certainly many poor, disenfranchised people. It also has vote-buying and electoral intimidation, as discussed by Banerjee (1996). He argues that this kind of thuggery can be "traced to the state's increasing propensity toward monopolization of power at the Center (which agitates the internal contradictions to danger-point)" (Banerjee 1996: 82). Put simply, the Indian state's economic policies have favored certain sectors, areas, cultures, and in short, people. Thus, it has, by centralization, created haves and have-nots, and Indian political violence has become basically class conflict.

To help ensure their privileged position, it is a given that Indian political elites often employ thugs to ensure the correct choice on peoples' ballots, especially in the countryside, as discussed by Banerjee (1996). This electoral violence is quite similar to that of the satgas parpol in Indonesia. Like in Indonesia, the elites' representatives on the ground use carrots of handouts but also sticks of threats. So in India, we see the intersection of (1) a state that cannot enforce its laws against violent contentious politics (and thus may have thugs in its political arena), (2) disenfranchised men working as thugs, and (3) employers that pay to used these underworld methods of control. There are lots of have-nots that need employment, and lots of sponsors that need staff.

In Sri Lanka, like in Indonesia and India, it is given that political parties employ militias and toughs. Coomaraswamy (1996) has interpreted this as one barrier to womens' entry into Sri Lankan politics; women are less likely to have been involved in the "man's world" of thuggery. If one's male opponent can be threatened with a beating, a female opponent can be threatened with rape, as documented by Coomaraswamy (1996). In cases like these, no great ideological debate divides the woman's party and the rival party which threatens her; Coomaraswamy (1996) is not discussing any Tamil/Sinhalese division. This is just a specific example of a threat used against a political rival. In fact the female politician in question later joined the party that had made the rape threat against her. These threats are real but seem to be a part of business rather than a desire to destroy the other one and her political idea. Following the wishes of one's employer or boss drives the thugs in these Indian and Sri Lankan examples. As we look more closely at political violence in Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia, we will examine more closely this interesting relationship between thug and employer.

Structures in Southeast Asia

So far we have looked at three conditions that seem to go along with political violence, namely: a state with an open or breached political arena; poor, marginalized people willing to work as political thugs; and finally, a sponsor for the violence. Now I wish to look at these conditions as they are in Southeast Asia.

Discussing political violence in Thailand and the Philippines will help us to see further distinguishing characteristics of these actions in the region and will illuminate the similarities and differences between these two countries and Indonesia. I will first briefly relate the situations of political violence in Thailand and the Philippines, then I will point out the continuities and useful points for my analysis of Indonesia in the next chapter.

The Philippines

From 1973[3] until 1986, the Philippines was a military dictatorship under President Ferdinand Marcos. In 1986, he was popularly deposed from power in favor of a democracy under Corazon Aquino, the widow of former president Ninoy Aquino.

From the late 1970s on through the 1980s, the Philippines faced a growing Communist insurgency calling itself the "New Peoples' Army" (NPA). The NPA was fighting for control of the country and actually dominated thousands of villages, collecting taxes, and organizing local administration. As a guerilla group, the NPA fought a bloody guerilla war. Their murders, violations of human rights and the "laws of war" have been documented by Orentlicher (1990) and the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (1988).

The Philippine Armed Forces and rich elites intensely opposed this rebel movement, and meant to fight it ruthlessly. Captured NPA fighters could expect no better

treatment from the law than they had shown to their own enemies. This had worked well for the Army until 1986. Corazon Aquino's new liberal democratic regime of 1986 soon enacted laws and signed international treaties banning torture and cruel punishments. With Aquino's new government also came expectations of cleaner police and military. No longer would security forces be free from "moral" constraints as they had been during Marcos' dictatorship.

So, the Philippine army and elites still meant to fight the NPA but at the same time avoid the scandal of the illegal methods they meant to use. So they formed a plan to eradicate Communists: they formed anti-Communist militias of common civilians. The army surreptitiously armed these militias and elites kicked in their share of pay and loot.

The national government, Ms. Aquino especially, likely opposed the formation of civilian militias (Lawyers 1988). However she ended up announcing government support for militias that were unarmed and did not force membership. Even if Manila opposed the formation of militias, they were quite powerless to stop it given that their own representatives, the Armed Forces, followed their own dictates rather than the dictates of their supposed bosses. The army broke into the political arena – and the Philippine government was too weak to keep this violent group from making trouble.

[3] Marcos had been elected to the presidency in 1965 and again in 1970, and later declared martial law and finally brought in a constitution tailored to his rule in 1973.

One can understand the Army's and elites' rage and frustration about an insurrection in their own country. But unfortunately, the methods they used involved a terrible human cost.

As an example, the most well-known vigilante group is Alsa Masa of Davao, formed in 1986. Nothing was "more important to the birth of [Alsa Masa] than the abusive behavior by the Communist New People's Army" (Lawyers 1988: 1). This is understandable in the face of the NPA's atrocities. However, the Philippine Army encouraged this trend of civilian vigilante groups, protected militias and sometimes "organiz[ed] vigilante groups where none had existed" (Lawyers 1988: 1). Other groups under different names, but documented with names of Army officers who protected them were found in Negros Occidental, North Cotabato, Cebu, Leyte, Misamis Occidental and Zamboanga Del Sur. These are all places in the south, far from Manila. These vigilante groups dispensed their kind of justice at their own whims. This is a classic story of breakdown of law and order.

The members of vigilante groups such as Alsa Masa, 4K, and other similar organizations are characterized as "undisciplined, untrained thugs" (Orentlicher 1990: 47). By the mid 1980s, many of them had previously or concurrently worked for the Philippine Army's shady and bloody "Philippines Constabulary" – quasi-military, semi-private self-defense unites originally organized to fight the Communist Huk Rebellion and later Muslim insurgencies in the south. We will meet men like these later in Indonesia: those whose métier is "security" and must needs work somewhere.

In 1988, the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights documented several recent cases of the military putting bounties on the heads of wanted men. The civilian militias, basically untrained, and given their targets (sometimes real NPA members, sometimes not) returned several times with the actual heads of murdered men. Sometimes the real target had been killed. Sometimes innocent men that "looked like" the targets were killed. In the former case the military claimed a victory and the militiamen got their money. In the latter cases, the army sent the militiamen and their heads away with orders to cover up the murder. Vigilantes are also documented hiding in military barracks from local police trying to arrest them on suspicion of murder. Many of the Filipinos who take part in these extrajudicial killings are so marginalized that they are willing to do this work.

However, not all members wanted to join the militias; the militias are also known for forced recruitment. To broaden their financial base, support, and probably image in the eyes of their patrons, the local militia leaders often forced men to join their group. Each household in a *barangay* (neighborhood[4]) will be required to pay dues, perhaps put up one member of their household as a militiaman or face violent consequences. This is nothing but extortion. Certainly this has nothing to do with ideology – this is simply local militia leaders trying to get more followers and become more powerful in their own right.

[4] The Indonesian equivalent is *kampung*.

The Lawyers document several cases of intimidation. For example, a man in Misamis Occidental suspected of being an NPA sympathizer was abducted, beaten, and disfigured (Lawyers: 100). In Negros Occidental militiamen strafed the house of a farmer, killing some of his family. The farmer himself was taken to the hospital the next day and was attacked again, in the hospital (Lawyers: 39). So the 'goons and thugs' can be a proxy force for the state or the police – the same, we will see, as in Indonesia.

No adherence to abstract ideas like "capitalism" or "freedom" drives this violence: it grows in the intersection of a too-weak government that cannot keep order in its political arena, disenfranchisement – people who cannot remove themselves from this violent atmosphere, and the presence of powerful elites fueling the fight.

As for violence directly related to the election, the Philippines has a sad record. Votes are known to be for sale so much so that many people look forward to the financial windfall of election times. However, not all votes are won by positive reinforcement. From January 12 until May 24 1992 election violence took 104 lives, wounded 105 people and resulted in 5 kidnappings (*PDP*, 24 May 1992, quoted in Sidel (1995: 148). These crimes were spread among "enforcement of illegal monetary transactions (such as vote buying and bribery), intimidation or elimination of unsympathetic voters, candidates, and election officials, and actual physical interference with the voting" (Sidel 95: 148). Not only do the 'goons and thugs' work as state proxies against the NPA; they also work for political candidates. It is

interesting to note also that they also work as private security guards – the same, we will see, as in Indonesia.

Thailand

In Thailand too, we see examples of people rallying, sometimes violently, to a "political" (read: patron's political) cause in a space where there are disenfranchised people to work, elites to employ them, and a government uninterested in or unwilling to stop them.

Since 1973 Thailand has been transitioning from a country ruled by the military toward a more democratic system. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Thai national politics were a battle between the old guard of military rulers and the new generation of businessmen. The military rulers stressed order and development; the businessmen stressed faster development. This is certainly not to say that there is a strong movement for liberal democracy by the Thai people. Quite the contrary. Rather, contentious politics have been established in Thailand because of the strength of business elites vis-à-vis military elites. These business elites want the military out of the government so that the businesspeople can govern themselves. And, of course, the businesspeople contend among themselves. Hence, the politics are contentious, but the factions are not defined by ideologies, they are more rival gangs clustered round certain persons.

Thailand is no exception to the culture of clientelism operating in parts of Southeast Asia. Mulder (1994) explains Thai conceptions of authority and McVey (2000) discuss the political manifestations of these perceptions and beliefs in rural Thailand. In traditional areas of Thailand, not in anonymous cities, Mulder explains that Thai people believe that

> [K]eeping society in good order is definitely the task of the government, culminating in a personalized leader, a 'man of prowess' capable of dominating the external world. He enforces desirable order, and what is good for him, as a father, should be good for all. It is, therefore, loyalty to him, and the collectivity he stands for, that is far more important than law as a means of maintaining good order. Consequently, the seeking of patronage defines political behavior, while the group – nation, state, region, country, and people – is seen and defined in moral rather than in legal terms. (Mulder 94: 167)

In this analysis, order, harmony among the subjects or 'family members' is the goal. A man that can ensure that harmony is the law because he brings the greatest benefits. The other people who also follow one's own patron, who believe in his prowess, become one's own nation or people or 'family'. When Thai people think of the external world, the world outside of their own family compound, they look for a man that will bring order to that external chaos just as a good father organizes a family. So for their part, people look for a man of prowess to follow and that man's word becomes law. The men of prowess themselves look for patrons, and a hierarchy of patrons is thus built from every village to the Prime Minister's office.

The word for these men of prowess in the Thai provinces are *chao pho*, "godfathers". The *chao pho* can be a local figure or can be head of large business enterprises. The *chao pho* is generally a businessman and runs businesses for which one needs licenses or concessions: logging camps, or liquor distribution, for example. As such, he will have little competition, and almost always oversteps his limits to make more

money illegally. Or, his business may be completely illegal. "In the provinces, those who run illegal gambling dens, casinos or underground lotteries" are known as *chao pho* (Chantornvong 2000: 56). In either case, of a mixed licit and illicit operation, or of a completely illegal business, a *chao pho* must have protection. There is no idea of the government enforcing contracts any more than the American government police enforcing Mafia deals. So, a team of toughs is a necessary accoutrement for a *chao pho* to scare away competition. During election time, *chao phos* can employ their toughs in the political field as well. Chantornvong (2000) mentions that Thai people periodically read of people shot down in "business-related" disputes around election time and know that it is something to do with chao pho. Arghiros (2001) relates having seen in 1999 a local political candidate's father going around from door to door in a village twirling a pistol on his finger and reminding citizens to vote for his son.

However, in Arghiros' example above, the candidate's father also gave about 10 days' wages to each citizen during his visits. It is this monetary exchange that exemplifies the changes in Thailand from coercive political violence to simple monetary transactions. This is an important point to which we will return at the end of this work.

Table 1: Prerequisites of Political Violence in Southeast Asia

	The Philippines	Thailand	Indonesia
Freedom for thugs to operate:	Acquino's weak state was unable to stop militias	Politicio-business elites allowing	Orba Indonesia used satgas and in turn allowed them to

		thuggery	flourish
Sponsor:	The Philippine Army	Business elites, *chao pho* running illegal businesses	The government, private organizations; political parties
Employees:	Men who joined militias to earn bounties or who were forced to join	Young gangsters	Unemployed youths

The next chapter will outline in detail the structures that allow the growth of satgas parpol in Indonesia. But first, I want to discuss the main similarities between political violence in the Philippines and Thailand in order to highlight and foreshadow similarities we will see in Indonesia.

Characteristics of Political Violence in Thailand and the Philippines

So far, I have argued that in the three Southeast Asian cases I have examined, political violence has at least three structural prerequisites. First, unobstructed political space; second, disenfranchised men who are willing to work as thugs; third, a boss or patron to sponsor these thugs.

However, there are a few more common characteristics between Thai and Philippine political violence that we will also see in the next chapter on Indonesia. I will discuss these commonalties here. They include lack of coherent political ideology among cadres, the declining importance of the patron-client relationship in favor of money-

based exchange, similar respect for thugs among some citizens, and common experience with rising expectations of democracy.

The Lack of Ideology

In the Sri Lanka example above (p. 22), I mentioned a female politician that later joined a party that had previously made rape threats against her. Coomaraswamy (1996) suggests that because the woman's previous party shrank away, she joined the bigger party so that she could still be involved in politics and push her political agenda. Apparently there was no big difference between her old party and her new one – perhaps neither had a strong guiding principle. In any case, she found the second party gave her space enough anyway. So, in that example, one does not enter a party because she believes in its "ideology" – it does not have one anyway. Many people, like her, join or support a party for non-ideological reasons. I think this concept can apply to the Philippines and Thailand also. In our two sample countries so far, politics is not about ideology, it's about other material gains or opportunities.

In the Philippines I mentioned that men (not women) were often forced to join the anti-Communist militias. In my opinion, an ideologically based group cannot logically force people into their beliefs. If an anti-Communist militia approaches a suspected NPA cadre and forces him to join the anti-Communists, that seems illogical; it seems like inviting an infiltrator into one's organization. However, in day to day life, it is doubtful that many NPA-sympathizers have a firm grasp of what is meant by Communism in theory, much less what happens in practice. Among NPA

members, very few got thorough political training (Orentlicher 1990). Much less would someone uninterested in Communism at all have a thorough knowledge of it. Instead, I suggest that group membership is based on pragmatism and personal experience. If a person had suffered at the hands of the government or the NPA, that would dictate one's political preferences, I believe. If one force or the other is taking over one's village, why not join the winning side, if you are indifferent to both ideologies?

This happens in Thailand as well. Generally the large political parties cannot readily be distinguished from each other. They all have similar guiding principles: pro-business and pro-development. They are generally all lead by tycoons. They are person-centered parties. Arghiros (2001) relates that during his fieldwork in Thailand in the mid and late 1990s, the people in the villages he observed were not well informed about the different candidates anyway. They tended to vote for whomever the temple's abbot recommended or anyone who was said to be a great benefactor.

Thus, it seems that for many people, political or electoral choices are made based on advice from local notables, or even just based upon joining the winning side. In Indonesia, we will see that some people involved in political violence switch sides.

Decline of Patron clientelism

The notion of benefaction or great donators is an important one in many facets of Southeast Asian culture. However, students of Southeast Asia will notice that I have carefully avoided using the term "patron-client relationship" in this discussion of

politics. This is because some studies (Sidel 1995, Kerkvliet and Mojares 1991) show that when it comes to elections, the classic patron-client relationship is being replaced by strictly economic exchanges.

A patron-client relationship is a partnership between two people of different classes: a poorer person and a better-off person. The well-off person provides material goods to his partner in exchange for respect and deference. A client may ask his patron for advice, physically protect his patron's interests, or lend his support on the patron's projects.

Patron-client ties are said to be an important social relationship in Southeast Asia. Neher and Marlay (1995), for example, emphasize the importance of patron-client ties. They argue that "patron-client ties are the very foundation of society and politics all over Asia" (Neher and Marlay 1995: 15). That is a broad statement, but the rest of their article qualifies it. They use a broad definition of patron-client relationships that includes even cooperative relationships between near-equals. They also believe that as societies become more urbanized, patron-clientelism declines (Neher and Marlay 1995: 16). I do not argue that patron-clientelism is dead; but I do believe we see evidence of its decline.

Though patron-client relationships may have been important in politics in the past, or may still be important in other areas of life, I believe that in Thailand and the Philippines they are declining among regular citizens and political bosses.

In the past, electoral violence may have been explained by patron-client relationships; that the clients of "big men" would willingly fight each other or threaten villagers at their boss' command. However, Sidel (1995) and Kerkvliet and Mojares (1991) argue that patron-clientelism is being replaced with simple impersonal payoffs. This is easier for the payer, and more beneficial for the payee.

Sidel (1995) argues that in the Philippines, electoral intimidation is definitely on the decline. Kerkvliet and Mojares' (1991) fieldwork in a growing town outside of Cebu City collaborates this. According to their research and interviews, their towns have not had real "patrons" since the 1950s. Instead, as towns grow more economically diverse, grand patrons have disappeared to be replaced by "liders" (from English "leaders"). This term is "used to refer to a leadership exercised for specific ends such as mobilizing people for undertaking a project or supporting a candidate" (Kerkvliet and Mojares 1991: 65). Each lider is thought to influence 30-50 voters, in a non-coercive way. The lider's group is usually his or her family, neighbors, or colleagues. In their article, Kerkvliet and Mojares mention a lider who is a teacher. Hardly a thug, and hardly someone who can dispense favors like a patron. Furthermore, parties may hire election season campaigners or election-day wranglers, but they are moving away from thugs.

This example indicates that, as towns become more economically diverse and, indeed, better protected and better educated, thuggery will not work anymore. Kerkvliet and

Mojares (1991: 67) mention that many of their informants haughtily said that landlords could no longer tell them how to vote. This is not to say that Philippine elections are not for sale; indeed they are. It's only to say that the sellers of their vote now know their value.

Arghiros (2001: 259-260) makes a similar argument for Thailand – that actually the idea of working for one's patron is on the decline, and furthermore that even intimidation is on the decline – because monetary transactions are the easiest and most beneficial for all parties involved. The villagers and chao pho and candidates know this. This is not to say that the concept of reciprocation is on the decline. On the contrary, it is because people have accepted money that they then feel that they should fulfill their part of the contract – delivering the vote that they have sold.

Patron-client ties are said to be an important concept in pre-Dutch, pre-Islamic Javanese political ideas. Anderson (1972: 34-35) elaborates on and explains this idea. In Javanese thought, a patron's power is determined by the number of followers, or *anak buah*, that he has. Liddle (1996: 82), however, further suggests that patron-clientelism is not as much a part of Indonesian or even Javanese culture as it is used by elites to reinforce their position in society. He suggests that the supposed "clients", the poor people do not actually believe in the special status of the relationship, but only pay it lip service to gain its benefits. Whether everyone believes in the propriety of the patron-client relationship, I believe it still exists in

Indonesia, though perhaps we will soon start to see signs of decline as we have in the Philippines and Thailand.

Given these examples, I would say that patron-client relationships are not the cause of electoral violence in Southeast Asia. Patron-clientelism in this sphere is declining – this traditional relationship in Indonesia may be replaced by class solidarity or capitalism. I feel it is being replaced in Indonesia. Overall, I think electoral violence is better explained by a repressive state, sponsors, and unemployment.

Institutional History

The history of a country's governmental institutions can also contribute to politics becoming violently confrontational.

Anderson (1996) compares the elections in Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia, and finds a common thread: each country experienced possibilities for democratic government, only to see them destroyed. In the countries, the unfulfilled expectations fuelled a final, ground-breaking rupture with non-democratic regimes. In each country, governments held non-democratic national elections; that is, the motions of an election in which real politics were not debated; votes were bought or otherwise secured. Peoples' expectations of some participatory democratic panacea were broken.

Generals in Thailand in the 1970s and 1980s, Marcos in the Philippines from 1976 through 1986, and Suharto during the New order all used participatory democratic *forms*, but did not implement the *spirit* of people participating in government. However, since their respective periods of undemocratic rule, Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia have had different success with democratic rule. Thailand has been the most successful, with the Philippines and Indonesia far behind. Anderson (1996) argues this was caused by Thailand having long had a native, stable, strong bureaucracy in contrast to Indonesia and the Philippines. Thailand had built up strong state institutions long before the people were involved in governance. Anderson believes that "there are good historical reasons for thinking that it is hard to build such a state *after* the spread of mass electoralism" (Anderson 1996: 30-33). Citizens, once they have gotten the magic "vote" expect all good things to follow from it. They have become enfranchised citizens and they expect their country to suddenly work like a long established democracy. They have high expectations which are not fulfilled. Even in a system with perfect elections, people can, Anderson argues, still feel quite disappointed when change doesn't come. Imagine systems that still have a long way before even the elections and campaigning become ideal – the citizens of those systems feel doubly disappointed in the democratic process. And this can be a source of instability.

Respect for Thugs

It is also interesting to note that though thugs are a source of misery to Southeast Asian citizens, they also inspire some kinds of respect and fear. We have already seen how Filipinos have been pressed into anti-Communist militias, for example.

However, Guinness (1986: 100) notes that in Ledok, a kampung in Yogyakarta "jago" (thug) is a term of scorn among working-class and middle-class people but a term of respect among the poorest people.

In the Philippines, many people in Davao City respect the Alsa Masa for standing up to the larger threat of the NPA. The militias are the lesser of two evils. Besides that, militia members all over the Philippines are seen to flout the law and never get punished. They even get paid. They often have tattoos and are sometimes believed to have magical powers. They are also from the people. These are not distant, strange elites. These are members of their own class, who, though they may do some bad things, are still powerful people, to be respected.

In Thailand also, the people are said to believe that power comes from one's innate abilities and whether it is used well or badly, it must be respected. Thai people also see that the savviest *chao pho* become the wealthiest (Mulder: 1994). If they use uncouth methods, that is just part of their exercise of power. *Chao pho* are not thought to be very benevolent.

So we see some respect for the power and financial rewards for thugs in the Philippines and Thailand. We will see the same trend in Indonesia.

Thus far, I have outlined some of the structural prerequisites for low-level political violence, To wit, wide entrée into the political arena, the presence of thugs willing to

do this work, and a patron to sponsor it. I noted examples of these structures in the Philippines and Thailand. We will see the same structures in Indonesia. I have also looked at three aspects of vigilante groups that foreshadow what we will see in the future study of Indonesia: the actors are not driven by ideology, and the citizens in the countries have endured periods of governments that promised democracy, but never fulfilled their expectations of political participation. I have also argued that traditional patron client relationships are declining in the countries under study, but that among the poorest classes, respect for thugs remains.

These structural preconditions and common aspects are excellent to study, but we must also look at the more proximate causes of political violence in Indonesia. The unique manifestations of Indonesian political violence include weaknesses in the police force, the lack of trust in the police, the concomitant growth of private security groups, and the "youth consciousness".

Proximate Causes of Political Violence in Indonesia

In each country, political violence has different proximate causes. In the Philippines, political violence was directly caused by the threat of the NPA, and by financial rewards offered to anti-Communist militias. In Thailand, political violence is linked to business, where businessmen employ thugs and use them for protection, but in political campaigns also. In Indonesia, the specific proximate causes of violence include: difficulties related to the police, a "youth consciousness", and lack of political space during Orba.

Security: a Public or Private Issue?

In Indonesia, party satgas do jobs associated with the police or with private, professional, independent security companies, such as body guarding and crowd control. This is because the police and the people do not have a good relationship, so people turn to private, semi- or un- professional security.

In Indonesia, the police (Polri) are beset with two major problems: lack of manpower, and lack of public trust in them. These problems lead people to solve problems among themselves. Even if the police were available, Indonesians generally do not trust them. Indonesia's police have a bad record of corruption from Orba. They are not considered neutral. Thus, people try to avoid the police.

In 1989, Jakarta had one police officer for every 1000 population (Nordholt 2002: 60); the ideal ratio is 1:500. The Polri realize this ideal is a long way off, and in 2004 one of their goals is to reach a 1:750 ratio throughout the country (Republik Indonesia 2004).

However, many citizens do not trust Polri anyway. Guinness mentions that kampung dwellers are reluctant to call in the police to settle local disputes; "these outside agencies attempt to affix blame, award damages, and in so doing leave irreconcilable divisions in the community" (Sullivan 1986: 159). The residents believe in solving their own problems without outside intervention or undue loss of face for anyone. Furthermore, the residents of the kampung may feel that outside forces such as city

employees, police or officials bring nothing but restrictions on life. "Kampung attitudes hardened into hostility toward . . . municipal authorities" (Guinness 1986: 172). City officials only came to the kampung to make raids or try to enforce building codes. The kampung residents had no interest in that kind of interference. In that way, it may be seen that the people do not count the police as allies.

Under Orba, during the 1980s, many people in the judicial and prison systems could be bought. Law-abiding citizens got tired of criminals so easily walking free, and hence, many actually supported a government massacre of criminals that took place in 1982 (Nordholt 2002: 59). Polri was so corrupt that people were no longer safe from crime. Some were glad that Suharto decided to have the criminals killed. (Though police reform would have been ideal instead). This massacre, the Petrus killings, will be discussed in more detail below. Suffice it to say here that normal people knew their judicial system was for sale and it disgusted them. No less than Yorrys Raweyai, a known gangster and former head of a Golkar-related satgas said about extortionist hoodlums "The existence of hoodlums totally depends on the security forces; only a clean security force could stop their operations" (Basrie, 1997). Raweyai basically equates the police with gangs of hooligans by claiming that the police are unclean. But he was correct; Orba police especially were known to be very corrupt.

In Indonesia, one sees men in a variety of quasi-police uniforms; these are different kinds of private security guards. As Nordholt (2002: 60) argues, police to population

ratios in Indonesia are so low that businesses and neighborhoods had no choice but to hire private security. According to Bertrand's study (2003), these quasi-police are untrained and unprofessional. And yet they have the right to detain someone (as best they can) and turn him over to the Polri. And, of course, the best security guards are those that are intimidating, and know something about the underworld.

Bertrand (2003) has studied three quasi-police forces in Indonesia and believes that the existence of "professional enforcers" contributes to the problem of thuggery and violence in the country today. I believe he has a good point. So let us take a look at his categories of professional enforcers.

First, he discusses the "Hansip", private persons hired by a neighborhood to patrol the area at night. Hansip are paid directly by the neighborhood residents. If a resident does not want to pay, he is made to pay. Next, Bertrand discusses "Satpam", men that patrol private commercial buildings and receive some funding from the police, and some from the occupants of the buildings. Finally, he discusses "Kamra", officers that, under the New Order, patrolled public places and received minimal funding and training from the police. These officers were hired to keep order in East Timor in 1998-9 (Siboro, 2002). The lack of training and professionalism among these quasi-police forces contributes to public situations getting out of hand. Bertrand recounts a story of Hansip beating a developmentally disabled man to death when he could not understand their questions. Up to 40,000 temporary Kamra hired for the 1999 election protested so vehemently when their work was over that the government was forced to hire them full time permanently. His research shows that

many of these particular 40,000 were gangsters from Medan and Surabaya. I think this example illustrates the nature of satgas; under trained, armed, thuggish, and not quite controllable.

Nordholt also points out the connection between official and unofficial security forces. He discusses a common situation whereby the gangs of thugs-cum-security guards are actually managed by retired police or army officers (Nordholt 2002: 60). However, of course, the thugs, who are also the ones behind local crime basically create their own market; they cause crime and insecurity, then get hired to stop it. This is nothing but officially-sanctioned extortion. The managers, as people with connections to the regime, also hired out their gangs for other services, including strikebreaking (Nordholt 2002: 60). It is no wonder that Indonesian citizens do not generally trust the police.

Pemuda Consciousness

Another aspect of political violence in Indonesia is the fact that it is practiced by youth; this may be because of a "pemuda consciousness" as explored by van Dijk (2002) and Anderson (1972). Youth groups contributed to the success of the Revolution, of the PKI massacre, and other historical moments. Thus, argues van Dijk (2002), many youths feel that fighting 'for the country' is somehow, part of the role of a heroic Indonesian pemuda. I think van Dijk's factors are important in explaining the political violence perpetrated by youths in Indonesia. The idea that one is partaking in an exciting, historical tradition may make the pemuda feel they are justified in violence. Van Dijk's article, *The Realms of Order and Disorder* discusses

gang violence among older schoolchildren in Jakarta. However, the parallels between this schoolchildrens' violence and political violence are striking, and are pointed out by van Dijk himself. Van Dijk emphasized two factors to explain schoolchildrens' violence and youth political violence (2002: 84-82). The first is the sheer excitement of participating in loud motorcades, attacking one's enemies, and destroying property in the name of one's cause (be it the honor of your school or your political party). Younger kids see their older brothers and sisters letting loose like this and look forward to their turn. In 1988, the MPR outlawed children under 17 participating in campaign rallies as an attempt to curb violence (van Dijk 2002: 84). This policy, even if enforced could only do a limited amount of good anyway; there are plenty of young people to fill their streets.

Van Dijk (2002) argues that all these factors above are not the only causes of pemuda violence. He mentions theories of socio-economic inequality, fast economic development, latch-key kids, and breaking of traditional life-patterns as contributing to the violence. Though these issues are important van Dijk argues that the examples of other youth (whether older siblings, peers, or youth of the past) account for more of youth violence. I do agree with van Dijk that the violence cannot be explained simply by socio-economic means. Indeed, Anderson (1972) also discusses a "pemuda consciousness" in his study of elections. Politically-minded youth see themselves as fulfilling a historical role.

Closed Political Arena

Orba Indonesia was a country with very little room for political debate; thus, at the times when some public expression was allowed, it could be explosive. Liddle (1996) agreed in 1996 that the Orba was a stable regime, but founded on a weak groundwork of developmentalism. Suharto, in public propaganda, emphasized consensual forms of decision-making as being inherently more peaceful. In Liddle's opinion, Orba was legitimate in the eyes of most Indonesians because of the concrete improvements in their lives in the previous 30 years. The regime had *developmental* legitimacy in contrast to *democratic* legitimacy. The forms of democracy were just a "useful fiction" (Liddle 1996: 1). The fiction of "democracy" in Indonesia was built upon a foundation of developmental success. However, because developmental success is uncertain and fragile, any state based on developmental legitimacy has an inherent weakness, an Achilles' heel. Surely enough, less than a year after Liddle's article appeared, the Asian currency crisis hit Indonesia, and less than a year after that, the Orba had been overthrown from within. So, having a consensual, as opposed to confrontational form of government, is no insurance against violence. If a state can maintain developmental legitimacy rather than democratic legitimacy for very long, it must be an exceptional case, rather than the rule.

Human Rights Watch (1992) also supports the theory that political rights (meaningful voting and opportunities to enter government) and human rights (freedom from torture, unjust imprisonment, freedom of movement, protection from famine etc) must necessarily go together. Without political rights, human rights are only granted at the whim of a non-representative ruler. The authoritarian country has no checks on

it to keep it from abusing its citizens. It is only an open regime with checks and balances that can start to protect all groups in society. Though a closed political arena can prevent political violence in the short run, in the long run, the arena must be opened up.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that low-level political violence in Southeast Asia has at least three preconditions: freedom for thugs to operate, either due to a weak state or to a permissive state; second, the violence needs a sponsor in the form of sponsors or leaders, this is not a kind of movement from below; third, the militias and gangs must have foot soldiers in the form of unemployed young men, conscripts, or young gangsters. When all three conditions are in place, we may see low level political violence.

In Southeast Asia, these groups of thugs and the violence they do have several things in common. First, they are usually driven by motives rather than ideology, such as fear, need for employment, or desire to be a "tough guy". Political education is not a priority among these "political" gangs. Next, if a country's government has raised expectations of democratization, but the democratization never came, or did not fulfill peoples' hopes, that can lead to the kind of malaise that makes people cynical about

politics and possibly receptive to using violence. Next, in each country, the thugs seem to enjoy a lot of prestige from the awe and fear of regular citizens. His tattoos and flashy style help add to this image. Finally, it is important to note that patron-clientelism, long an explanation for all kinds of relationships in Southeast Asia is not a cause of political violence. In Thailand and the Philippines, patron-clientelism is in the decline, being replaced by capitalistic exchange.

Finally, I introduced the proximate manifestations of political violence in Indonesia: Orba's allowing private paramilitaries to function so widely that they rival the police, a class of non-police "private enforcers", the "pemuda consciousness" that pulls many young men toward extreme participation in politics, and Orba's suppression of political expression that led some to turn to violence in lieu of other avenues.

This chapter has raised a sort of theoretical framework for explaining the prerequisites of political violence, and its characteristics. By making a comparison of Indonesia and two of its neighbors, I have started to answer how and why satgas flourish in Indonesia. The next chapter will detail historical development of satgas in Indonesia.

Chapter 2: Political Militias in Indonesia, 1945 – 1998

Introduction

I have argued that violent contentious politics have the most chance of arising in a political situation characterized by some open political space, disenfranchised persons who are willing to fight in the name of politics, and a sponsor for the groups. This chapter focuses specifically on violent contentious politics during the period of the Republic of Indonesia. I will trace the history of private groups doing violence in the name of politics, and some of the characteristics of such groups from 1945 until 1997. These characteristics include violence as a "youth" phenomenon, the difficulty of controlling these groups and the lack of very precise political programs in their minds. The groups under focus here agitate for a political reason, be it for a political party, independently, or for the government. We will see satgas of all three: of political parties, of the government, and independently-acting ones. This section concerns all of Java, with a focus on Yogyakarta where possible, until the fall of Suharto in 1998.

Pre-Independence Era

Indonesia, being a vast archipelago, does not admit of easy organization. Indeed the idea of "Indonesia" encompassing what it does today was not born until the 20th century. In pre-15th century Indonesia, Hindu kingdoms rose and fell with time and ruled islands and parts of islands with no sort of political unity among them. In the 1400s, the influence of Islam, and later of Islamic rulers, grew, though no one

established a Sultanate covering the whole archipelago. Throughout Indonesia, at least a veneer of Islamic belief has been spread. In certain places such as Aceh and East Java, Islamic beliefs are especially strong and important in everyday life. By the 17th century, Europeans began to come to "Indonesia" for spices, and the islands of today's Indonesia were eventually colonized by the Dutch. Dutch control advanced slowly toward the interior of these islands; this was a protracted process, not even completed by the turn of the 20th century.

For 40 years before the Japanese invasion of 1942, independent political organization among Indonesians was minimal. Only a very few Dutch-educated Indonesians knew or cared much about concepts like nationalism (Reid 1974: 3), though all Indonesians knew what exploitation by the Dutch was. However, religious based organization was more common. The two most important religious groups for the political future of Indonesia were founded before 1943: Muhammadiyah in 1912 and Nahdatul Ulama in 1926. Muhammadiyah was founded in Yogyakarta as a modernist Islamic organization. It promoted purer practice of Islam (as opposed to the syncretic Islam widely practiced in Java). Muhammadiyah also helped answer the demand for modern Dutch-style education by opening elementary schools wherever they established an office. Nahdatul Ulama (NU), founded in East Java, and still strongest there, was a more conservative organization which promoted traditional Islam as it had long been practiced in Java. It too promoted wider education, but through the traditional *pesantren*, local Islamic schools. Though neither of these organizations

formally tried to enter politics or undertake mass action (Reid 1974: 5), they were a place in civil society for Indonesians to gather completely outside of a Dutch world[5].

An important exception however, was the Communist party. Before the Japanese invasion, the Communist Party was already strong in Indonesia. It was universally popular among intellectuals, and was "the strongest in Asia until its suppression in 1927" (Reid 1974: 6). The party in Indonesia, the PKI (*Partai Komunis Indonesia*), attempted a revolt in Java in 1926 and was beaten and banned the next year. However, it was not wiped out completely. For the next forty years, underground Communists would still be active in Indonesia, and would have a strong political party after the Indonesian Revolution.

The Japanese Occupation

During World War II, the Japanese quickly defeated the Dutch in Indonesia. With them they brought rhetoric entirely different from that of the Dutch. They demonstrated the weakness of the Dutch and told the Indonesians of Asian supremacy. However, the Japanese were as cruel masters as the Dutch. The Japanese claimed that they did not want to be "colonizers" like the Europeans. Instead they had a vision of a "Greater Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere" in which all nations of Asia would work together for greater glory, wealth and development. Though their propaganda did not say so, the greater glory, wealth, and development would be for

[5] For an excellent dramatization of early 20th century, politics, change, organization and life in Java as experienced by a young, introspective Indonesian, see Pramodeya Anata Toer's *Buru Quartet*.

Japan. The other countries would be free in name only. They would have an illusion of freedom but actually be subservient to Japan. The Japanese

> "appeared to feel that they could exploit the resources of Indonesia for the benefit of their war effort without having to make concessions to Indonesian nationalism . . . speedily the Japanese were disabused of this idea" (Kahin 1952: 103).

The Japanese used Javanese resources while the people went without. As this situation became worse and Javanese became more and more hostile, the Japanese began to worry about Javanese antipathy and insurrectionary potential.

To get more cooperation from the Indonesians, the Japanese leaders co-opted nationalist leaders, such as Sukarno, who would be the first president of independent Indonesia, to propagandize for modernization under Japan's "guidance". However, by the end of 1943 it was obvious that the nationalists used by the Japanese were "accomplishing considerably more for the Indonesian nationalist movement than it was for the Japanese war effort" (Kahin 1952: 110). Sukarno for example, was using the platform given to him by the Japanese to emphasize nationalism rather than to talk very much about the glory of Japan. So, the nationalist movement gained strength in Indonesia during the Japanese occupation despite the fact that Japan only wanted to allow puppet independence.

To help ease their military burden, the Japanese began to train paramilitary forces in the islands (always with Japanese officers in the higher echelons). These paramilitary forces would have two objectives: internal policing, and self-defense against the

Allies. The Japanese organized several paramilitary groups in Indonesia for self-defense. The most important was Peta (the *Pembela Tanah Air* [the Fatherland Defense Force]), of which the junior officers were Indonesian (Kahin 1952: 109). Many of these junior officers would become revolutionary leaders within two years.

However, by 1944, the Japanese knew the war was not going well for them. They realized that they would soon be driven out of Southeast Asia. They stepped up organizing youth conferences to discuss independence (Anderson 1972: 53). The Japanese continued training Indonesian paramilitaries and stepped up their propaganda about a free Indonesia. However, by July 1945 the Japanese were running out of time, and Indonesia had not been allowed to declare its independence yet. The Japanese surrender came more quickly than anyone thought it would. In August 1945, just when the committees had been prepared for planning independence, the Americans dropped the two atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and orders came down from the Emperor to surrender. As part of the surrender terms, the Japanese were obliged to keep the peace in their occupied territories until the Allies arrived to take control. The Japanese could not then in good faith encourage an Indonesian declaration of independence.

True, the Japanese commanders did not feel able to overtly encourage independence, but they obeyed the letter of the law only, not its spirit. One would imagine that perhaps some of the individual Japanese thought of this as some revenge on the Allies; some definitely, such as Rear Admiral Tadashi, and perhaps Admiral

Yamamoto himself, supported Indonesian independence if Dutch rule was the alternative. In any case, men such as these did not really do all they could to prevent Indonesians taking over their own government in August and September 1945 (Anderson 1972: 44). They put up only token resistance to Indonesians taking control of their own country. Then on August 17, 1945 the nationalist leaders, Sukarno and Hatta, made their declaration of Indonesia's independence.

I think it is best to trace violent politics in Indonesia since 1945 because this is the first year in modern times that (some of) Indonesia was free from foreign suzerainty and that Indonesians began to work toward a modern, unitary government of their own design. Though there are traditions and ideas about warriors, rebels, and toughs that date from even before Dutch times, I believe that 1945 was the first year of contentious politics driven by modern ideas, and as such, is the appropriate place to begin my survey.

Introducing the Actors

First, I shall introduce the actors we will meet. We will start with the *preman*. This comes from the Dutch "vrijman", meaning an Indonesian "free man" -- not tied to any particular plantation or place. The term has gone through many permutations, most not respectable (Ryter 1998). It is a man (always a man) who probably does not have a steady legal job, who may be a drifter, and who is on the margins of society. Preman make up the ranks of many criminal gangs. His occupations may include

running parking lots, regulating traffic for money, collecting debts, being a bouncer[6], being a security guard or making book[7] -- all technically nonviolent work. But all work where a show of force is helpful. Preman may also do outright violent work, such as extortion, or intimidation-for-hire. Of course the line between "intimidator" and "debt collector" is thin, especially in a country with a very low police-to-population ratio (see p. 43). He may extort money from local businesses, but he will protect his clients from other extortionists. He will collect outstanding debts for his clients. He will take care of problems that the police should, but don't, handle.

A related term is *politik premanisme*, meaning politics characterized by thuggish, rough, violent preman-like behavior.

The preman should be distinguished from the *jago*. A jago is a traditional figure in Indonesia. He is a village "tough" guy. He could be employed in marginal professions such as being a pimp or a professional gambler, like a preman[8]. He and the preman may both have tattoos as example of their toughness (Sullivan 1986: 101; Siegel 1998). However, the jago has special knowledge. He generally knows Indonesian martial arts – pancak silat, or has magic powers – *ilmu*, or both. He generally has a group of younger male followers, called *anak buah*. According to Anderson (1972), the jago may be a bit of a wanderer, or he may have a school teaching his esoteric practices.

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[6] The bouncer is the big man that stands at the door of a nightclub, brothel, etc and screens people before letting them in, or kicks them out if they fight while inside.

[7] This is being a "bookie": someone who takes bets on anything people wish to bet on: sports, election results, etc. He literally writes the bets in his "book", holds the money and redistributes it to the bettors.

Now, for groups, the first to know is *pemuda*. Pemuda literally means "youth", collectively. In political terms, it means youth movements; their members should be below about 35. In modern pemuda groups, most of the members are students or former students, that is to say, people with a good bit of formal education (see Kristiansen 2003, Boileau 1983: 89). They are generally local groups, but can coordinate on a regional basis also. Pemuda are characterized by their use of fiery rhetoric, their desire for action, their unaccountability, their pemuda consciousness, and sometimes their use of low-level violence. In a way, they are heroes for their uncompromising stances, but in another way, they are villains for their destructiveness.

Next are the *laskyar*. These are also local groups pushing for political change, but with an Islamic ideology. Their ideas run a spectrum from complete Islamization of Indonesia, to simply laws based on more Islamic principles. They may have members of all ages, and are usually led by a *kyai*, a Muslim leader generally in charge of a *pesantren* (Islamic school). The kyai's closest students are also known as his followers, his anak buah. At times, radical laskyar groups may espouse violence also.

The Indonesian Revolution: 1945 - 1949

[8] For an account of the jagos in one Yogya kampong, see Sullivan (1986: chapter 4).

So, to return to the story. On August 19, 1945, after the declaration of independence, the Peta was disbanded by the Japanese at the request of a faction of Indonesian nationalist leaders. These nationalists, such as Suharto and Hatta, believed that the use of these Japanese-trained troops by the independent Indonesian state would compromise their country's bargaining position vis a vis the Allies. Leaders like Sukarno and Hatta were insistent that the only way to win independence was through negotiation with the Dutch, and they did not want to have any troops that the Dutch could criticize as Japanese-influenced. The dissolution of Peta is important. These demobilized troops were the members of the first militias. Younger Indonesian officers who wanted to fight for independence but lacked an army to join

> "returned to their home areas and began to recruit local pemuda, whether from the Peta or the Heihō or from the Seinendan and other paramilitary youth organizations . . . the mass of rural and urban pemuda who had been mobilized in . . . Peta, Heihō, and other organizations started to flow out over the dykes these structures had once formed . . . the decline of military power brought about their dispersion into myriads of smaller or greater pools of militarized and semi politicized youths" (Anderson 1972: 106-108).

"Militarized" and "semi politicized" are the key words here. The pemuda members did not generally have a good grasp of political principles, processes or tactics. These youths had heard about nationalism through Japanese filters. They had new ideas about political organization.

> "The Japanese political style, then, presented the youth of Java with a new mode of political life and action that by sheer contrast implied a radical critique of the values and political ideas that Dutch rule had instilled in their fathers" (Anderson 1972: 120)

They were also trained in basic guerilla fighting techniques. And they believed that their élan was just as important as their weapons and training. They had been trained with something of the ideas of the kamikaze, and with the lust for *merdeka*[9].

These were the first violent pemuda in the modern sense, and Anderson (1972) argues that they indeed steered the Indonesian Revolution at least through 1946 with their demands for action and their refusal to negotiate. It was, in fact, pemuda elements from Jakarta that kidnapped a cautious Sukarno and Hatta on August 16, 1945 and *forced* them to declare Indonesia's independence. While the two were never threatened with physical violence, they were taken to a village, held incommunicado, and made to acquiesce to the will of the pemuda and the people.

So, the independence of the Republic of Indonesia had been declared in 1945 – by a Sukarno and Hatta literally held hostage by pro-war Republican elements and uncompromising pemuda. These two Indonesian founding fathers had preferred a negotiated, peaceful independence from the Netherlands. Many other Republicans wanted to avoid fighting. But by the end of September, throughout Java, bands of Republican radicals began to prepare themselves for armed struggle. Generally under the leadership of jago, former Peta officers, students, or simple gangsters, these bands gathered weapons and materiel to fight the return of the Dutch. Their members were the "semi politicized and militarized" urban and rural proletariat; people hit hard by shortages and unemployment. They also included preman. They were often able to

[9] Merdeka means "freedom", and was a greeting and rallying cry of Revolutionary Indonesia.

get Japanese arms because the Japanese supported them anyway. Most of these militias were left-leaning, socialist or Communist. It seemed to be granted that the new Republic would reject western-style capitalism. They were truly the vanguard of the Revolution.

In Jakarta, for example, the "Jakarta militias" of the independence period were full of petty criminal types: jagos and preman, for example. Their story is fully documented in Robert Cribb's classic *Gangsters and Revolutionaries* (1991). Cribb explains that criminal elements participated in the war for independence around Jakarta. Jakarta was allied-held and the site of independence negotiations. In early 1946, pro-war militia and laskyar made a strategic retreat from Jakarta. Neither Indonesian nor Dutch leaders wanted militias in the city, so the militias left, cutting the city off from the country. They held these positions around the city for months. They wanted to protect the countryside from the Dutch, but also wanted to keep an eye on their own leaders and be able to attack Jakarta if necessary. Laskyar and militia leaders took over positions of local civic authority in the countryside. In the struggle, these men (and women!) were gaining legitimate prestige as Republicans. They hoped they would retain this prestige after the war.

So far, this is positive, but it is important to know that the militias did not work only for freedom. Profiteering and smuggling were rife; the militias basically controlled food supplies into the city and preferred to trade rice for weapons. Surely most legitimately supported the war effort, but they also had plenty of profits in hand, and

hoped that their "revolutionary services" would be recognized and that they would have a more respectable place in post-war society. They hoped to keep the positions of authority that had taken over in the ground around Jakarta. But please note, they did not overlook momentary gain for the chance at greater gain after the war. In Cribb's (1991) argument, this desire for respectability and a position in the legal world drove most of the preman who chose to join the Revolution.

In Anderson's (1972) study concerning pemuda all over Java, he emphasizes the role of the young people that joined the Revolution not for any hope of personal gain specifically, but because they wanted to fight for merdeka. Again, the groups he surveyed were all of the left or Islamic. In his *Java in a Time of Revolution* Anderson (1972) studies the role of the pemuda in the struggle from 1944 until 1946 especially with respect to government and cabinet crises caused by the revolutionary pemuda. Anderson sees this time as a struggle between the older nationalist leaders such as Sukarno and Hatta, who favored *diplomas* versus the pemuda who favored *perjuangan*[10].

By 1946, even though negotiations with the Dutch continued, the Indonesian government knew well that it needed an army and worked toward organizing one. They allowed informal paramilitary units to join the army, often together with and under their leader. So in this way paramilitary leaders could get a position of legitimacy if they wanted one.

Now that we know the background of youth and paramilitaries in revolutionary Indonesia, we must now look at the ways in which they have and have not contributed to the organization, actions, and image of satgas parpol today.

First, the idea of a radical vanguard of youth in politics was born, and has been idealized and put into the pantheon of Indonesian history. Anderson notes that

> "on the Indonesian side, a whole literature of glorification attests to an exultant consciousness of the sudden emergence of youth as a revolutionary force in those critical times. . . [but] for the Allies as well as the Eurasian and Chinese communities, the once innocent word *pemuda* rapidly acquired an aura of remorseless terrorism" (Anderson 1972: 1).

Yes, pemuda are violent, but they are also admirable as revolutionaries, especially in Indonesian eyes. Incidentally, twenty years later, Suharto would play up the role of pemuda in the Revolution, in order to deflect glory from other leaders. So the idea of youth fighting for politics is something generally established and accepted among Indonesians.

If youth are fighting, it also happened in the revolutionary times that jago and preman joined the struggle, not generally for any ideology beyond freedom – and perhaps hatred for the Dutch. We have seen that in Jakarta, paramilitaries, pemuda, and laskyar protected and confined the city for mixed reasons. Coast (1952) also notes,

[10] Perjuangan translates as "struggle" and meant fighting for immediate freedom, ending negotiations, and giving no concessions to the Dutch.

incidentally, that other, more criminal groups used the name of pemuda, conflating the two in the minds of the public. Just after the end of World War II, before the Dutch in Java were released from their internment camps, Couch relates that

> "some purely criminal gangs using the *pemuda* name . . . carried out a series of horrible and insensate raids on these camps, and hundreds of men – and women and children – were butchered and tortured. Hatta and Sjahrir did their best to stop such insanity. But the average Indonesian remained unrepentant, where the Dutch were concerned, deeply suspicious and ready to fly into violent action on any provocation, imagined or real" (Coast 1952: 16)[11].

Some pemuda and preman, paramilitaries and laskyar fought for revenge. The point is that "youths" attacked and massacred Dutch prisoners; these same "youths" could have also been some of the ones that were heroes fighting for the Republic. In any case, while "revenge" is not a personal good *per se*, it's not an ideology either, and this lust for revenge, I believe, helped drive the more bloody actions of the paramilitaries. Normal Indonesians were capable of becoming violent where the Dutch were concerned. This frustration worked itself out in violence in the name of merdeka.

This desire for revenge is a sentiment that certain partisans of any revolution will feel against the enemy. Perhaps once one has felt such hate, the idea of "righteous hatred" can be passed down as a legitimate emotion for a few generations and maybe transferred to other enemies, political enemies. This element of remorselessness

[11] But take Couch's statement with a little disbelief; he was an Englishman who dedicated himself to the Republic's cause and became a blockade runner and Foreign Ministry official for the fledgling Republic. He would likely not have believed anything too negative about his favorite cause.

characterized more radical pemuda that worked with preman elements. It was quite usual for preman and students to work together in paramilitary bands in any case. Each group learned from the other.

Disparate Paramilitaries

Another characteristic of the paramilitaries that we still see in the satgas of today is their uncontrollability. Paramilitary units were small enough that their leaders were agreed upon by the members, and looked at as a father figure rather than a commander. And the members would not listen to anyone but their father; but at the same time, their leader held control at the members' own pleasure. Abdul Haris Nasution observed that

> "in such circumstances, the *bapak* [father] held a power position vis-à-vis his superiors. He could not be transferred. Nor was he willing to carry out orders which he opposed. Moreover, in the long run, many such bapak simply became the executors of their subordinates' wishes" (Nasution 1955: 154-55, quoted in Anderson 1972: 236).

For example, when the Indonesian government wished to arrest Tan Malakka, a popular Communist intellectual, for his opposition to its program in 1946, they had no problem doing it. He did not have guards or personal paramilitaries to protect him. However, Anderson (1972: 328-329) argues that some of Tan Malakka's partners were not arrested *because* they controlled paramilitaries which the government dared not antagonize. So paramilitaries' loyalties were on a rather immediate level, something we see still in the satgas of today.

John Coast (1952), writing about his experiences in revolutionary Yogyakarta makes special note of the pemuda as revolutionary fighters. Coast notes their "stubborn, fanatic, seething spirit . . . Made up of patriotism, of nationalist, and anti-foreign feeling, of a desire to show the world that they were not inferior beings, their spirit had in it something of bravery, but also a considerable amount of viciousness and undisciplined nervousness" (Coast 1952: 132). The pemuda are not well-organized, and often act without a great amount of forethought, each trying to show his fervor for independence. Admired by his countrymen, but also a bit frighteningly unpredictable. I believe these words could equally be applied to the satgas of 1999.

Satgas Ideology during the Revolution

In revolutionary Indonesia the forces driving paramilitary fighters would have been class conflict, practices and ideas inherited from the Japanese, desire for position or glory, and ideology. Like the satgas of today, the paramilitaries were not governed by a patron-client relationship. Just as today, political violence during the Revolution was not due to a patron-client relationship in which the patron funded clients to do things for his own glory. The relationship paramilitary fighters of their commanders can be characterized as a father-child relationship, or even as a teacher-student relationship. This is not the traditional "patron-client" relationship in which the junior partner provides labor and glory to the senior partner in return for material goods or favor. As noted above, in practice the relationship among paramilitaries was more like an ideal Soviet organization; one in which the leader is chosen from and guided by the led.

For class conflict, an observer contemporary to the Revolution, notes that in Solo, the pomp of the rivalry between the royal houses of the Susuhunan and the Mangkunegoro became so rich and disgusting that the "feeling of respect and obedience, of awe and service to the ruler on the throne began to diminish" (Dwidjosugondo 1954[?] quoted in Anderson 1972: 351). This is definitely not in line with the usual argument that Javanese blindly adore their nobility. In the Residency of Pekalongan in October 1945, pemuda and laskyar briefly overthrew local *priyayi* and *bupati*[12] because these rulers, in the Dutch and Japanese eras were the conduits through which the people were oppressed. In fact, three regencies in northern Central Java are famous for having been very rebellious against the upper classes in their area. Lucas (1991) narrates these October 1945 events, the so-called *Peristiwa Tiga Daerah* (The Three Regions Affair). The people hated their rulers for collaboration, and finally ran them out of town. These rebellions were ended quickly once the government stepped in, but they are evidences of class conflict.

But let us inquire more closely about the paramilitaries' ideology. It was actually quite superficial. Sutan Syahrir, a notable Indonesian nationalist and no great friend of slow negotiation himself, observed that while the Revolution in its early stages was driven purely by the idealism of the youth,

> "the present psychological of [the] youth is deeply tragic. In spite of their burning enthusiasm, they are full of confusion and

[12] Priyayi are the educated upper middle class in Java; Bupati were local leaders with much day-to-day power over Javanese peasants, and the heads of the kabupaten (see table 3, p. 175)

> indecision because they have no understanding of the potentialities and perspectives of the struggle they are waging. Thus their vision is necessarily very limited. Many of them simply cling to the slogan 'Freedom or Death' (Sjahrir: 1968, quoted in Anderson: 1972: 193).

Most of the paramilitaries had rather more limited formal education and did not have a program beyond freedom, hatred of the Dutch, and in most cases, love for Sukarno.

As far as the revolutionaries went, "while subjectively their intentions might be good, objectively their actions were harmful and dangerous" (Anderson 1972: 390). For example, all Indonesians wanted to be rid of the Dutch and win physical control of their own country as soon as possible, but kidnapping nationalist leaders and massacring Dutch prisoners went too far. In a revolution, it is acceptable to be violent, but some actions are so radical they are counterproductive. Such is generally one stage of a revolution.

So far I have highlighted paramilitary action during the revolutionary period as a youth phenomenon without precise ideological goals, and not under the control of anyone above a local level. Now I will look at the role of political paramilitaries through 1965.

Political Paramilitaries, 1950 - 1965

When Indonesia finally gained its independence from the Dutch, the power of the pemuda and laskyar had waned, atrophying from lack of leadership. Again, these

were still local, rather atomic groups. The next major period in Indonesian political history would be a period of parliamentary democracy lasting from 1950 until Suharto's coup of 1965. During part of this period, Anderson (1972: xiii) lived in Indonesia studying the pemuda and gave him "the idea that an identifiable pemuda consciousness existed". So let us explore this pemuda existence.

Party Organization

From 1950, Indonesia had a unicameral parliamentary government. Its house was the *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* (People's Representative Assembly [DPR]). Its members were directly elected by the people.

However, many people were dissatisfied with the slow or nonexistent improvements in their lives. Parties proliferated and cabinets rarely lasted a full year. There were four major parties. First, the NU, based on the Naduhatul Ulama, the largest Muslim organization in Indonesia, and oriented toward traditional, locally-influenced Islam. The second was the PNI, the *Partai Nasional Indonesia*. This was a nationalist, secular party which liked to associate itself with Sukarno through the shared ideology of nationalism. The third was the PKI, the *Partai Komunis Indonesia*, an internationally-affiliated Communist party. The fourth was Masjumi, a modern-leaning Muslim party born of a Japanese attempt to unite all Muslim groups under one umbrella.

By 1957, the military was becoming fed up with political bickering. Government business was deadlocked by uncooperating parties in the Parliament. Parliamentary democracy was not the dream people had imagined. Even the parties were fed up. The Army[13] convinced the parliament to declare martial law in 1957. The Army took martial law seriously and began taking over bureaucrats' jobs all over the archipelago, and nationalized and took over Dutch-owned businesses. (This is, incidentally, the time from which major armed forces involvement in business dates.) They believed that they themselves, the heroes of the Revolution could do a better job at governing.

Sukarno himself, also tired of deadlock, was formulating ideas about a new form of government that would use the best elements from liberal democracy, Communism, and Indonesian practices. Politically, he formed the concept of "functional groupings". In Bahasa Indonesia, this is *Golongan Karya,* and literally means "functional groupings", one's function being one's job or defining role. In his concept of "golkar", functional groups, peoples' role in politics would not be channeled through a party, but rather through their "group". This is difficult to explain, but easy to illustrate. Sukarno had a list of between 20 and 30 major functional groups, such as "labor", "peasants", "businessmen", "women", "artists", "religious leaders", "armed forces", and "youth". Each citizen would be a member of his or her appropriate golkar's organizations. In this scheme, when a citizen wanted

[13] In the Indonesian context, interservice rivalry was intense to the point where the services did not work toward the same political goals. In this thesis, when I say "the Army" I mean strictly the Army. ABRI (*Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia*) means all of the Armed forces.

to involve himself in politics, he would go through his golkar's political channels. There would be no competing political parties. The parliament would have a set number of seats for each golkar, and each golkar would elect its representatives. Under this theory, the golkars would ultimately be united under one large government organization, the capital-"G" Golkar. In fact, Golkar would be officially founded in 1964, and really be put to use in 1971.

This theory appealed to the military because they would have guaranteed parliamentary representation as an organization. As an important, primary functional group, the Army saw itself leading the nation through its organized, rational control of politics. Three of the four main parties acquiesced to this idea. Only PKI, the most modern, organized, ideology-based party objected to the abrogation of competitive politics. Succinctly, Lev notes that "each party was not so much defending the political system which sustained it as trying to protect its own position in whatever system happened to emerge" (Lev 1966: 228). So, in 1959, during a period of martial law, Suharto decreed a return to the strong-presidential system of the 1945 Constitution and with a pliant parliament and helpful military started the period of "Guided Democracy" which he hoped would eventually end in a golkar system.

The military, while not threatened by the private gangs and militias left over from the Revolution, did try to co-opt them as a way to get Army control over "social" groups. The Army thought it should somehow organize other aspects of Indonesian life as

they planned to organize and rationalize political life. At this time, parties already had internal "functional groups" of their own, such as the PKI womens' branch, or NU youth, for example. The youth groups of all political parties plus some other student organizations were invited by the Indonesian Army to join a front organization, the "Youth-Military Cooperation Body". The name sounds strange, but this was not a recruitment drive. Lev points out that the purpose of the cooperation body "was to loosen the parties' grip on these "functional groupings" and to bring them instead under the Army's wing" (1966: 65). This was simply a move on the part of the Army to weaken political parties. This scheme did not succeed; the officers running it were supposedly politically incompetent. By the next year, political parties had removed their youth groups from the cooperation body.

By 1958, each political party employed satgas parpol, though that name had probably not yet been coined. Instead the satgas were simply "youth organizations". Each party may have employed different satgas in different regions; satgas were not nationally organized very well. But, the most important satgas were the PNI's *Pemuda Demokrat*, Masyumi's GPII (*Gerakan Pemuda Islam Indonesia* [Indonesian Islamic Youth Movement]), the NU party's Ansor[14], and the Communist party's *Pemuda Rakyat* (Peoples' Youth).

One can understand the one aspect of the independence of satgas vis a vis the parties by looking at their organizational histories – some satgas predate the parties. The

[14] "Ansor"'s etymology is unclear; it may be a proper name.

satgas tended originally to be youth organizations that attached themselves to parties for ideological reasons. Pemuda Ansor was founded in 1934, as the NU's security guard, long before NU got into politics (Suryadinata 1998: 62). Golkar's satgas in West Java, the AMS (*Angkatan Muda Siliwangi* [The Siliwangi Young Generation]) was founded in 1966 by youths influenced by the Army's Siliwangi division (Boileau 1983: 87). They attached themselves to Golkar because they agreed with Golkar's vision of modernization and government without parties.

So, with this background, let us explore the continuities between satgas of this period and the militias of the Revolution.

Part of the satgas "existence", I will argue, is lack of party discipline. Or, more positively, independent thinking even within a party. The parties generally could not make their satgas follow orders. This is logical if one of the characteristics of satgas is "youth". (In extreme cases that we will see later, satgas will sometimes attack their own party facilities.) Lev (1966: 102) hints of the independent thinking of youth in late 1957. The youth wings of parties would question their elders; their acquiescence to military leaders, their grasping for office. They were not answered. In this period, I have not found any examples of youth violence against their own party. However, 1950 to the early 1960s was a (physically) calm period of Indonesian politics; not much call for street action, the métier of the preman faction of political youth.

There were also apparently independent thugs. Technocrats opposed to the Armed Forces' take-over of Dutch businesses found themselves harassed by "roaming youth groups who regarded themselves as acting for Sukarno" (Lev 1966: 35). These particular thugs were not associated with a party. They had simple loyalty to Sukarno. In 1956-1957, "tough and lawless youth groups roamed the cities; in Jakarta, some of those who had fought in the Revolution rallied to Sukarno . . . devoting themselves to harassing his opposition" (Lev 1966: 50). These more independent groups likely had some thug and preman elements. In the future, youth groups would espouse more of these thuggish actions.

However, Lev (1966: 1) notes that "Guided Democracy" is explicitly authoritarian; political suppression. . . [had] accelerated since 1957, with the government attempting to maintain a tight rein on an increasing number of activities". Sure enough, the parties would atrophy further, but at least for a brief while, their subsidiary organizations would not. The parties, consumed by jockeying for position in Jakarta wasted themselves and became more willing to listen to central authoritarian command.

In the 1950s and 1960s, each political party was surrounded by subsidiary organizations that were not suppressed during Guided Democracy. These subsidiary groups under each party would be the same categories as functional groups: labor, peasants, women, students, or youth, just to name a few. Though their political parties declined in importance in Jakarta and became mere figures, the organizations

remained somewhat vibrant. In 1967, "too soon" after Suharto's coup and the PKI massacre to know their effects, Lev thought possibly the parties' still-strong youth groups bent on democratization refusing to let multi-party competitive politics die would challenge Suharto's state (Lev 1967). He believes that during Guided Democracy, the youth groups actually were more vibrant and dynamic than the parties because of suppression of the parties by the government, and the pliability and conservativism of the older generation of leaders. In the end, of course, the youth did not challenge Suharto, but it is interesting to note that at least one well-regarded Indonesian observer thought it possible.

Political Violence for and against the New Order, 1965-1997

Guided Democracy continued for about 8 years, until 1965, when the military took over direct rule of the country, transitioning to the sole leadership of General Suharto. During this period, the government shrank the number of political parties by coerced consolidation or setting high requirements for recognition as a 'party', for example. This was also the golden era for Golkar. Satgas parpol remained active when possible. However, in addition to being employed by political parties, we will begin to see the same kinds of men employed by the government and the army to do those groups' 'illegal' violence.

From 1965 until mid 1998 is referred to as the New Order (or Orba – *ordre baru)* in Indonesia. During this time, the country had a thin veil of democracy provided by elections. But the country was actually an authoritarian system run basically by

Army-oriented policies, headed up by General Suharto. One of the important ideological features of Orba was *dwifungsi* (dual function). Under the idea of dwifungsi, as articulated by General Abdul Haris Nasution, the Army had two roles: one was physical defense like a normal army. The second role was that of overseeing or seconding civilian government. The armed forces are a government structure parallel and equal to the bureaucracy. The importance of dwifungsi would be taken for granted by the army and imposed upon civilian government. The legislative branch of government also got a change. In addition to the elected members of the DPR, there would be government-appointed functional group representatives. Taken together, the DPR plus the appointed representatives were called the MPR, the *Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat* (The Peoples' Consultative Assembly). This system of military-authoritarian rule would solidify in the 1960s and 1970s. The 1980s, the years of oil money and economic growth were probably its golden age. By the 1990s, people were getting fed up with this strict rule, and in 1998, it would be deposed.

Now, with this short background, let us examine Orba especially with respect to political violence.

PKI Massacre

For 8 years until 1965, the Indonesian parliament continued to languish and Sukarno continued to dominate the government. Sukarno's government was based upon a supposed coalition of the three biggest political ideologies represented in parliament:

NASionalisme, *Agama* (religion), and KOMunisme; this cooperation was called NASAKOM. Following NASAKOM was the politically correct thing in its day. Sukarno himself preferred a one-party Golkar system. He was impressed with the one party systems of China and the USSR. He felt that working with the socialists, he could achieve a Golkar system blending the best of western and Indonesian traditions. This lean toward socialism, however, antagonized more conservative elements in the government (Legge 1972: 374-375).

In 1965, the PKI was the most ascendant party in Indonesia. Many days the guards at the US embassy in Jakarta watched Pemuda Rakyat members spray paint anti-American slogans on their walls and protest outside. The uneasiness and political uncertainty of that year are the subject of C.J. Koch's *Year of Living Dangerously*. On October 1, 1965, Indonesia awoke to the news that seven of its top Generals had 'disappeared', that Sukarno had 'been removed' from his home for his own safety, and that the country was under military rule.

The mastermind, or at least the public face, of these events was a Lieutenant General Suharto. He let it be thought that the PKI had finally allied with Sukarno to take over the country, and that their first step was killing off Army leadership. Suharto painted himself and other younger officers as saviors of the nation. Rumors and circumstance and the Army itself blamed the PKI for the Generals' disappearances (and subsequent murders); however, it is rather more likely that Army officers set up the Communists so that they themselves could seem to rescue the country in a time of emergency. The

Pemuda Rakyat (the PKI youth group) were implicated by the Army Commander. Army officers felt disgusted at Indonesia's political drift and economic stagnation. They also worried that the PKI was becoming too strong, too outspoken, and too close to Sukarno. So, the Army clique with Suharto got the other generals murdered somehow (theories vary), and saved the country by taking the reins of the government and crushing the PKI, the scapegoats.

By 1967, General Suharto was in sole charge of the country, but to consolidate the power of the conservative forces, Suharto launched a massive massacre against Communists. Sukarno had been forced to resign, and the Army had annihilated the PKI – by causing the deaths of perhaps 1,000,000 people (Cribb, 2001) in the two years since 1965. These people were PKI members, sympathizers, or perhaps just thorns in the side of the government. However, notice I said the Army "caused" the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. The army did not personally kill so many people. They were, strangely enough, reluctant to be seen breaking the NASAKOM troika. But they did want to destroy the PKI. So, "the various religious and nationalistic groups accordingly, with the tacit approval of the army, launched a frontal attack on the party [PKI]" (Sloan 1971: 67). So, youth groups and PDI members often killed PKI and sympathizers in Central Java, East Java and Bali respectively.

First, let us look at Central and East Java. Youth groups took part in the massacre. Ansor, the youth group of Banser, NU's militia, took part in this massacre. As

enemies of so-called atheists, and, incidentally, a party demanding land reform and growing at the expense of the NU, this Muslim group, organized in units at pesantren, killed PKI, and suspected PKI. Robert Cribb has collected eyewitness testimonies of, for example, an informant hiding in the country who saw Ansor youths decapitating PKI under the supervision of Army officers (Cribb, 1995). Banser and Ansor also assisted and guided Army units looking for Communists and their sympathizers (Edman, 1987). Perhaps Banser did this out of nationalism, or fear of atheism or communism. Or, more darkly, perhaps some NU elites felt threatened by the PKI's growing influence among the people. The NU today admits their role in the 1965-66 massacres (Olliver, 2004); Abduramahan Wahid offered a public apology to the victims. NU has spawned an NGO called "Syarikat" whose business is to investigate, document, and atone for Banser's role in the massacres[15]. But Banser was not the only group involved in killing.

It is documented in interviews and archives that the CIA supported the PKI massacre, and even shared intelligence on PKI members with Suharto. However, Peter Dale Scott expands on the CIA's role: they also supplied training and aid to "civic action" groups – with the right political agendas (Scott, 1985). The Indonesian Army handed weapons to civilians, both in Banser and in US-funded anti-Sukarno, anti-Communist "action groups".

[15] For more information on the reconciliation, see http://www.syarikat.org/

An example of an "action group" would be the *Mahasiswa Berjuang* (Students' Struggle) in West Java. As early as October 5, 1965 they had attacked and burned a PKI office in Bandung (Boileau 1983: 87). Interestingly, it is members of Mahasiswa Berjuang who would form a more active youth group, the AMS, who in 1967-68 would became the satgas for Golkar in West Java as noted above (p. 73).

In Bali, the PNI took part in killing their political rivals. For this thesis, it is interesting that PNI satgas parpol were mentioned in interviews and newspaper articles about this time. Drawing from 1966 articles and interviews he conducted, Jeffrey Robinson reports that

> "the military encouraged armed anti-PKI vigilante gangs. The most prominent and the most feared were the PNI-backed Tameng Marhaenis, bands of 8 or 10 men who roamed about dressed in black armed with knives, spears or firearms" supplied by the military" (Robinson, 1995: 300)[16].

Here, the military sponsored the violence but declined to do the brutality itself.

The 1965-67 massacres were an example of private muscle in public employ. This PKI massacre took place without evidence or trials[17]. Suharto wanted to rid himself of a political threat and consolidate his own position. As a thorough anti-Communist, Suharto might have genuinely believed he was doing the right political

[16] Some interviewees report also seeing bigger gangs of 10-15 men. Also, an alternative name of this satgas was *Tamin Marhaenis*. Robinson's informants and sources differed about the name.
[17] For a first hand account of the dragnet that caught Communists and non-Communists alike, see Budiardjo (1996).

thing by ridding Indonesia of the PKI. He encouraged and allowed people to act on any prejudices or anger they might have had about Communists. These untrained civilians did act on their own prejudices, fear, and greed. The point to remember is that the state armed untrained civilians to do illegal, extrajudicial work; and also, that the violence spun out of Suharto's personal control. We will see the same trend, in mercifully paler shades when we study the political violence of today.

Some Communists that survived this massacre, however, would be out for vengeance. In many villages close to razed PKI villages, the inhabitants lived in fear of reprisals should all the PKI not have been finished off. This is yet another step in the cycle of violence.

The massacre of the PKI does not fit the general pattern of political violence because it was so severe, so murderous. Yes, the violence was done in many cases by youth groups, but this time it was done with a specific, though negative, political program. That it spun out of control is obvious to most observers, but to the Army of 1965, the massacre may have reached just the proportions it wanted. It's hard to say then whether this violence was out of control of its creators. This was an extreme case and is not electoral violence in any case. However, it is an important period in satgas and political history.

Early New Order Elections

By 1969, Suharto felt secure enough to schedule an election for 1971 which, in the end, would be marked by some incidences of political violence. The DPR had not been changed since the "Cooperation Cabinet" appointed by Sukarno in 1960. For the 1971 elections, one hundred of the 460 seats in parliament would be appointed by the government. The DPR plus the appointed representatives would make up the MPR. Ten parties contested the elections. The number of parties had dwindled due to atrophy, Sukarno's meddling in parties and engineering their splits and demise, the outlawing of Masajumi, a big Muslim party, and of course, the extermination of the Communist party. The most important participating parties were the PNI, NU, the Muslimin, and *Golkar*. Golkar, being the umbrella for all "functional groups", was not called a party, but it had all the same characteristics as a party, and for all practical purposes was a party, the government party[18].

By 1970, Suharto's government had almost finished the preparations that would ensure Golkar's victory in 1971. First, the Bapilu (*Badan Pengendalian Pemilihan Umum* [The Body for Managing the General Election]), was stacked with loyal cadres. Pliable leaders headed all of the parties. Physical force against rival parties was specifically outlawed. Civil servants were forbidden from being members of any political party, but necessarily were members of Golkar. The Army and the government were in close alliance, and the dwifungsi system was well-entrenched. The police force had been subsumed under the Department of Defense. Golkar's and the Army's shared vision was that of *pembangunan* and *keamanan* – economic

[18] For an excellent concise history of the development of Golkar, see Boileau, 1983

development and peace. In their opinion, all dissent and politicking must be suppressed, the people must work and keep quiet, to ensure the number one priority of economic growth. They would not allow any real free choice. They would hold an election, but use the above-mentioned methods to ensure Golkar ballots. The appearance of an election was important.

Golkar and the Army needed rural votes, but against these country dwellers, whom Golkar considered "too stupid" to understand political arguments, they sometimes used intimidation to ensure votes. Golkar's number one public campaign tactic was sending entertainment and pop singers to the villages -- just as political parties still do today. Golkar also promised development to all villages who voted for them. But there was also some violent campaigning.

For example, Golkar used intimidation to make members of other parties join them. These are only a few examples of their methods. Golkar defaced a mosque in East Java with anti-NU slogans, for a mild example (Ward 1974: 166). For an extreme example, a new word was coined, "*diBulelengkan*". It comes from Buleleng, a city in Bali, and literally means 'to be Buleleng-ized", and figuratively means to be forced into an organization. In that city, hundreds of PNI members decided en masse to join Golkar; it is said because Golkar released former PKI to wreak revenge on PNI (Ward 1974: 44). Ward also documents some intimidation he witnessed in villages in East Java (whose names he disguised). In one village, water was denied to rice farmers who declined to join Golkar. An unrecalcitrant PNI member was arrested on flimsy

grounds and paraded around town to intimidate others. Golkar (as well as NU and PNI) employed *bromotjorah*, bands of gangs and hooligans traditionally based in East Java, to intimidate rivals. This is an interesting example of a completely non-political criminal gang being hired for political work -- truly hired muscle, not overzealous youth (Ward 1974: 170-171). This, to me, is a blend of financial and political motives coming together in political violence.

Ward also argues that some of Golkar's leadership supported violent, illegal tactics. Ward cites a Golkar internal document called *Memenangkan Pemilu untuk Golkar*, "Winning the Election for Golkar" by Sukardjono, the Resident of Madiun. In Ward's translation, Sukardjono argues that Golkar is

> "duty-bound to seek power by winning absolute victory in the coming election in order to develop the country. . . we may become rather rough; let us be clever but uncivilized; let us put pressure on people, frighten people, and behave as if possessed by the devil"(Sukardjono 1971, quoted in Ward 1974: 73).

However, in the press, as parties still do today, excesses are blamed on "excesses" and "overacting" on the overzealousness of local cadres, rather than on party policy (Ward 1974: 51). The activities of satgas in 1955 did not have a decisive effect on the election, but in 1971, the violent cadres of Golkar played a part in convincing voters to vote yellow.

Just because Golkar wanted to use coercive tactics did not mean they always had smooth relations with their youth groups. As noted above, the AMS was a politically-oriented youth group, formed before Golkar. In 1966-1968, the AMS leadership

warmed to Golkar's ideas, and set themselves up as Golkar's youth allies in West Java. Boileau (1982: 87 - 93) made a study of AMS and Golkar's relationship in 1977. AMS had routinely criticized Golkar for materialism, "dropping" leaders from Jakarta rather than choosing local leaders, and not having grass-roots contact with the people. From interviews and witnessing meetings, Boileau concluded that AMS felt that Golkar, by 1977, had become too status-quo oriented and were actually *underutilizing* their radical youth allies. Though up to half of AMS' funding came from Golkar, they were not silent followers. This, again, shows the independent thinking and unpredictability inherent in youth or satgas groups.

Ansor, the NU's youth group, also likely engaged in violent politicking. In the tense atmosphere, a rumor started that Ansor had planned to kill Golkar supporters and had prepared holes for bodies of Golkar activists in Malang (Ward 1974: 107). Of course the NU denied this; the rumor was probably sowed by Golkar. But nonetheless, given Ansor's recent record during the 1960s I would have believed Ansor able to massacre Golkar cadres if they had wanted to. Ward alludes to a vague pamphlet printed by The Indonesian government listing intimidation, violence, and even murder perpetrated by Ansor against Golkar cadres (1974: 108). Perhaps such a government document is not a reliable source, but I believe Ansor to be capable of violence, and the report likely contains a kernel of truth. Besides that, the fear caused by such believable rumors is a problem in itself. Ansor may also have used violence against NU defectors to Golkar to extract money (Ward 1974: 110). Ward said he 'had heard' of Ansor extracting money from NU defectors, but unfortunately he gives us

no further details or documentation. However, given the history of Ansor, I find these allegations believable.

Though the PNI was at a low ebb, with the death of Sukarno and an internal split between right-wing and left-wing members hampered party activities. In the late 1960s though, the PKI youth had still been rowdy. In 1966, PNI youth stormed Brawidjaja University, accused the professors of not being loyal enough to the Revolution, and of being too rightist. They also harassed university students that had not joined their organization (Ward 1974: 112). The PNI needed supporters. However, I believe that forced conversion is not the way to get dedicated followers. I believe the appearance of solidarity was more important to PNI youth. Threatening someone may get immediate results, but not long term commitment. But this emphasis on the small world of the university does, however, show the youths' limited agenda and skill.

So we see the role of the militant youth in 1971. Its involvement was not in the same league as youth involvement in 1945. Indeed, outright violence, as opposed to intimidation, was not comparatively widespread. Using Anderson's 1972 analysis of 1945 (as I have done in this thesis), Ward argues that "if the short-lived pemuda Revolution epitomized the upsurge of local, spontaneous, and anti-authoritarian elements", Golkar's triumph was the exact opposite, that of organization, order, discipline, and hierarchy (Ward 1974: 180). Golkar's control of government resources and its displays of power were what sent it to victory.

> "Though intimidation at the kabupaten[19] level of government did undoubtedly sway scores of unattached or undecided voters to come out in support of Golkar. . . coercion or intimidation by itself [sic] could not explain the magnitude of Golkar's electoral success" in 1971 (Hering and Wilis 1973: 15).

The parties, especially Golkar practiced violence and intimidation, but these were not the decisive factors in vote-getting.

So 1971 was not characterized by much pemuda action; the New Order was a time for the people to keep quiet and let the government do its work. When PNI youth in 1972 dared protest a Suharto pet project for a public park representing Indonesia in miniature, General Sumitro called the protests encouragements to subversive elements! (Ward, 1974: 196). The New Order had no time for frivolous debate. Their idea was that the people had voiced their opinion in 1971, so no more need be said; the mandate was in place.

The next time the electorate would make a choice would be 1977; this election is most notable for the first appearance of the modern *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*, (The Development and Unity Party [PPP]). Until today, they have the reputation of being the most unruly, violent party. Their reputation is violence is worse than that of Golkar. However, I believe this may be because the people expected the worst from Golkar anyway, and had hoped for better from opposition parties.

[19] For a chart of local government hierarchy, see table 3 (p. 175)

After the 1971 elections, the government forced what opposition was left into two parties. They were the *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia* (the Indonesian Democratic Party [PDI]), based on nationalist and Christian parties and centered on the skeleton of the PNI. The second was the PPP, a Muslim party, whose biggest component was former NU party members. The government pressured party leaders into these alliances by arguing that Indonesia needed less political division; that parties must be sacrificed for *keamanan* and *pembangunan* – peace and development. By 1972, these unions had been achieved.

The union of the Muslim parties had the negative effect of driving radical Muslim opposition to the government underground. Whereas before 1972, there were small Islamic parties that supported the peaceful transformation of Indonesia into an Islamic state, after 1972, the only Muslim political voice was that of the PPP. And the PPP, as an officially pliant party, had no space for such beliefs. Thus, anyone that believed in radical Islamic politics was left out and went underground. Some of them, of course, became violent radicals, even allying with radical leftists. Utrecht (1980: 20) argues that these groups were an important, though sometimes dangerous, voice against Suharto. It is this strange mix of violence and Islam that would characterize the PPP of the 1980s. Maybe these underground groups still had contact with the party, at least on a local level.

Golkar reused and intensified the same violent tactics it had employed in 1971. Golkar (correctly) felt that their most dangerous competitor would be the PPP. They

knew that its constituent members were better organized than those formed into PDI. Throughout Java, but in East Java especially, PPP supporters were harassed and attacked by Golkar youth groups, the police, or *thugs hired by Golkar*. Utrecht (1980: 31-33) lists a few of these violations. Offices and homes of PPP supporters were looted. A child was taken hostage until his family joined Golkar. The police shot PPP members in different places, and some died. Thugs beat up people attending a PPP meeting. In Bali, Golkar was especially hard on the PDI, destroying houses, and attacking more than 1,000 people, killing some. I would think that in all of Indonesia, this kind of violence among all parties altogether probably counted less than 5,000 victims, including property crimes; it was not the most pressing problem of the day. But nonetheless, it is a phenomenon we will continue to see. And we have seen so far that this violence is not always perpetrated by "overzealous" party members, but sometimes simply by hired thugs.

The PPP also was charged with violent campaigning. Golkar lodged complaints about PPP kidnapping its members in West Java. Golkar is said to have submitted "four books" of PPP violations to the Minister of Internal Affairs. In Yogyakarta, youths from the PPP-affiliated IAIN Sunan Kalijaga[20] were accused of throwing stones at female Golkar members, resulting in a few being hospitalized. The same day in Yogya, April 12, 1977, PPP thugs attacked members of a KORPRI (*Korps Pegawai Republik Indonesia* [Civil Servants' Corps of the Republic of Indonesia – an organization obligatory for Civil Servants to Join]) unit and injured three (van Dijk

[20] An upper-level school

77: 30). Golkar party documents also report their meetings being interrupted, their cadres being attacked, kidnapped, and even a few murders in other parts of Indonesia (van Dijk 1977: 31). Though many of these incidents were simply "reported" or "heard of" by van Dijk and recorded in his study, the numbers of stories show that there was violent campaigning, even if there was "another side" to every story. Each party claimed "self defense" or "retaliation", and went on with their violence, despite pledges and laws against it.

Students tried to block Suharto's reelection as president in 1978 in "street parliament" protests, but failed. Until 2004, Indonesian presidents were elected indirectly, by the MPR members, as in a Parliamentary system. The presidential election of 1978 would take place after the MPR was convened in 1977. Tens of thousands of students protested, but to no avail. Suharto answered with the closure of universities and forbidding the press to cover "student activities" (Utrecht 1980: 44). Pemuda was still active, but they faced an increasingly assertive Suharto.

In 1977 election, violence was not the deciding factor in Golkar's victory. Golkar's victory

> "should be explained more in terms of the political structure rather than the means employed by some individual leaders. The fact that the government bureaucracy, KORPRI, was part of Golkar and that the military also sided with the 'functional group' guaranteed victory for the organization" (Suryadinata 1982: 30).

Control of media outlets, of the election commission, of campaigning schedules and of the police guaranteed Golkar's victory. The violence that occurred was unnecessary, and even criticized by some Golkar cadres such as General Widodo (Suryadinata 1982: 30). Older, and hence, probably more conservative thinkers saw the futility of violent campaigning, but could not really stop it.

In the mainstream press (*JP*, 19 May 1999) and in the opinion of some scholars such as Nordholt (2002), 1982 was the first election in which satgas in their present part-criminal, part-political form emerged. However, my arguments so far show that there was satgas activity before that.

Indonesia witnessed electoral violence again in 1982, but this time, there were more deaths. The election was supposed to be peaceful and orderly. Golkar's election machine was fine-tuned and Suharto felt in control of his government. Election laws had been revised to shorten the campaigning period and give local authorities more power to prohibit mass campaigning. Also, Suharto had delivered some concrete economic growth via oil money. At the time, Suharto was not portrayed as he would be 15 years later as a thief and cheat. Indonesian citizens were not thought to be very dissatisfied. However, the violence released in the 1982 campaign season would belie this impression.

Continuing its decade-long decline, the nationalists, PDI, was not very vocal or assertive during the 1982 campaign. The party was weakened by internal splits; the marriage of unlike parties was not a smooth one.

In the months before the May election, tensions between Golkar and PPP grew and erupted. Awanohara reports that before the campaign period, the parties and the Army had decided that "election contestants should play a greater role in policing rallies and that [government] security forces would maintain a low profile" (Awanohara 1982). Not only does this acknowledge the fact that political parties already had security teams of their own, but also that the police and army were unpopular with the people. It is no coincidence that the same article reports that Indonesia's Defense and Security Minister at the time, Mohammad Jusuf, was a "proponent of a more professional and politically neutral Abri". In 1982, there was something of a rift between Abri and Suharto; hence, I believe, with their ununited front, potential for political violence.

The worst incidents in the 1982 election were riots at two massive Golkar rallies in Jakarta in March and April. At both events, it seems that PPP members attacked Golkar meetings. (Though Nordholt [2002: 55] says that many people he spoke to also thought this disturbance could have been a Golkar internal wrangle using Golkar cadres dressed as PPP supporters.) Frustrated with this chaos, the government issued orders that rioters should be shot on sight. Altogether fifteen people lost their lives and around 150 people were injured just at these two rallies. In contrast, a 1,000,000

– participant PPP rally in Jakarta ended peacefully (*FEER*, Apr 30 1982). Smaller incidents in other cities including Yogyakarta were reported. In fact, the election security chief, Admiral Sudomo, admitted that at least eight of the campaign deaths were caused by "warning" shots fired by the Army (Suryadinata 1982: 52). About sixty people were thought to have died during and due to the 1982 election (*FEER*, April 2, 1997). Though the Army seems to have been the biggest perpetrator of electoral violence, examples like this explain why PPP satgas have such a bad reputation; their own rallies went well probably because of protection, but they attacked Golkar's rallies. That being said, attacking Golkar *per se* did not decrease the PPP's popularity in Jakarta (where they were strongest); rather, it was the PPP's wildness which intimidated many people.

Golkar used PPP's wildness against it in campaigning. Golkar realized that urban voters, at least, were disgusted with electoral violence. So Golkar began to campaign in Jakarta on a national unity platform. "the Golkar government capitalized on the affairs [of March and April 1982] to condemn violence and national disunity . . . while implicitly blaming the PPP for the riots" (Suryadinata 1982: 60). This campaign worked in Jakarta, at least, where in 1982 Golkar would beat the PPP at the polls. Overall, however, it does seem that some parts of Golkar tried to leave behind its violent activities in 1977.

Petrus[21]

In 1983, though predictions of Suharto's eminent retirement came more frequently Suharto again was comfortably re-acclaimed president. And he decided to attack the problem of petty crime. However, he used methods that remind me of the 1965 PKI massacre. Keep in mind that Suharto let private persons actually massacre PKI members during the 1960's. Presumably, Suharto thought the method worked well. So he used private muscle again in 1983 to 1985, to end this problem with petty crime. Suharto began to persecute and kill ex-convicts. Perhaps he thought this would be an appropriate solution to petty crime. Siegel points out that Suharto may have felt he could acquire a folk reputation for some sort of awesome power by killing so many people (Siegel 1998). In any case, Suharto's actions in the early 1980s would have an impact on today's satgas.

Barker (2001) argues the connection between the 1983-1985 massacre and the satgas of today by the mechanics of Suharto's purge. First, Suharto's security forces drew up secret lists of ex-convicts and suspicious characters in 1983 and 1984. The existence of the list, though not the names on it, were publicized. If one had ever had a minor brush with the law and worried that their name was on this list, they had to report for surveillance – and were often put to work killing the criminals that declined to report. The state "handled" its petty crime problem, but the petty criminals left living obviously had very few employment options. They were unable to return to crime, and often employers declined to hire ex-convicts. A lot of these men fell into

[21] PEmbunuh misTeRiUS (Mysterious killings)

semi-legal security work, as *preman*. Ryter (1998) agrees that indeed, the *Petrus* killings changed underworld organization in Indonesia. She classifies the criminals that got killed as *gali-gali.* She argues that these "gangs of wild kids" were broken up, many of their members killed, and the criminals that had turned to work for the state she classifies as preman. These preman often went to work in security services loosely affiliated with the police. Outright crime became a difficult and dangerous way of life; people in this marginal line of work were better off moving a more gray area of work; preman-ism. However, instead of exposure to police reforming the preman, it often lured the police toward the freer and easier methods of the preman.

The army began the Petrus killings, the massacre of criminals by the army or the army's agents in Yogyakarta in early March 1983.

> "This area was and is not any the more crime ridden than other areas in Java (and certainly not as heavily urbanized), and so the reason for its becoming the testing ground of the first 'Petrus' campaign remains unclear" (van der Kroef 1985: 748).

We still are not sure of the reason why Petrus was first started in Yogyakarta.

These preman gangs have grown and today most of the members have never been in jail; nor are they dedicated criminals, according to Kristiansen (2003). Instead, they are unemployed youth with no other job prospects – so they join gangs. However, Beazley notes that street boys and young men in particular, are

> "presented by the state and the media as a defilement of public space, an underclass which needs to be eradicated, and as

> 'criminal'. The construction of this criminal image is exemplified by the use of labels in the press such as 'preman' and 'gali-gali'" (Beazley 200: 476).

These young men, surviving on the edge of society, sometimes turn to crime from lack of other options, but to classify the bulk of them as some kind of hardened criminals or mafia is an error.

Late New Order Elections

For the 1987 election, the Indonesian government again tightened campaigning restrictions, ostensibly to prevent violence. Only eight outdoor rallies would take place in Jakarta; each would be limited to 50,000 participants. Just two weeks into the campaigning, a clash between PPP and Golkar sent eight people to the hospital in Yogyakarta (*The Sydney Morning Herald* April 8, 1997). However, the election was marked by far less violence than the 1982 election. This may be because PPP was suffering from internal fissures (*FEER* April 23, 1987), and the PDI was too feeble. Perhaps opposition satgas, suffering from the parties' disorder also lost focus (and funding).

Another possible contribution to the calmness of the 1987 elections was the 1983 death of Ali Murtropo, Suharto's top political fixer. It is speculated that Ali Murtropo wanted to take charge of Golkar and succeed Suharto as president. Thus, he was suspected of trying to split up Golkar from within and generally usurp things under Suharto. He perhaps engineered the 1982 violence and the Golkar rallies. When Murtropo died in 1983, Abdurrahman Wahid, an NU leader and future Reformasi-era

president of Indonesia, hoped that with Murtropo would die a "psychology of fear" under which Indonesians had lived. (Wahid in *Kompas* June 6, 1983, quoted in Nordholt 2002: 52).

The 1992 election was yet even calmer than the previous one. The campaign period was only 25 days long, and while "lively, even entertaining, there were no obvious signs of acrimony between the contending groups" (*FEER* June 25, 1992). The rifts within PPP blunted its claims as an 'opposition' party; before the elections, they endorsed Suharto for yet another presidential term. Only a few cases of political violence were reported by the BPHPR[22]. In June 1992, PDI supporters besieged the Military Police headquarters in Bogor demanding release of three of their comrades. Scuffles broke out between the Police with Golkar against the PDI. A few injuries were reported (BPHPR 1992: 19). In Tangerang, West Java on the same day, PDI youths were attacked with knives and machetes by "youth of unknown identity" while idling after a PDI rally (BPHPR 1992: 15). The BPHPR report cites other incidents, but all on the outer islands. To me, this shows that Golkar was continuing its strategy of less use of violence, especially in Java where communications are better and people are more knowledgeable about their rights in general.

I would explain the quietness of the 1987 and 1992 elections in two ways: economic prosperity and the effect of Petrus. In these years, the country was relatively well-off.

[22] BPHPR is the "Body for the Protection of the People's Political Rights Facing the 1992 General Election" [*Badan Perlindungan Hak-Hak Politik Rakyat dalam Menghadapi Pemilihan Umum* 1992]. It was an informal body under the human rights activist Haji J.C. Princen. Among themselves they documented and

By 1987, the country was self-sufficient in rice, for example; and though there was still a large poor class, "abject" poverty – starvation – had been eliminated (*FEER* April 23, 1987). In 1992, Michael Vatikoits reported a few vignettes from Yogyakarta: a pedicab driver who did not "know anybody who owns less than three shirts", and a woman who was glad to finally have a municipal water tap in her neighborhood (*FEER*, June 25, 1992). This was a relatively prosperous time in Java; there was no question that Golkar would win the election; hence, it was quiet. Another contributing factor may have been the Petrus killings. As grim as the ideas is, that massacre wiped out thousands of people living on the margins of society; the kinds of people that may have joined satgas for some sort of security. This would be a good topic for further study.

Before the next election in 1997, the Golkar would misstep in its handling of an incident with PDI.

In 1996, the Suharto government would be challenged by the PDI and majorly lose face in its response. One of Golkar's tactics to divide its opposition was to take sides in PDI and PPP internal party rifts. The government would only recognize the candidate of its choice, the more pliable one. In 1996, Golkar tried this trick again. In 1996, the PDI chose as its chairwoman Megawati Sukarnoputri, daughter of Sukarno. Her rival, Suryadi, objected to losing the chairmanship. He and his supporters secretly appealed to the government for redress. Suryadi and his

commented upon many kinds of election violations in their 'White Book'. They presented their findings to

supporters held a controversial party congress in Medan where he himself was elected chairman. Megawati and her supporters refused to vacate PDI party headquarters in Jakarta, and the government stepped in to forcefully remove her[23].

The government used preman gangs and military dressed in civilian clothes to oust Megawati from her building. PDI's own satgas and youths defended the office. Reportedly, Megawati sympathizers from all over Jakarta came to witness the melee, which grew into rioting against government buildings. On both sides there were victims of beatings, and at least three deaths (*AWSJ*, August 1, 1996). This event would be the first major crack in Golkar's fortress. From 1996 until after the 1999 elections, political tempers became hot, and violence was a part of the struggle for and against Golkar.

Clashes between Golkar and PPP youths filled the newspapers during the 1997 campaigning period. Again, satgas interrupted each others' rallies, defaced property, and got into brawls. Political scientists described it as the most violent New Order election for several reasons. Cornelis Lay of Gadjah Mada University said in an interview with the Jakarta Post on March 15, 1997(b) that elections are supposed to be

> "a peaceful alternative to violent coups d'etat, or revolutions, when people no longer trust their government. . . however, it [peaceful change] can hardly be achieved in Indonesia because its political laws do not allow it to happen."

the MPR, but the MPR never acted upon it (BPHPR 1992: 1). It was translated at Cornell in 1994.

[23] See O'Rourke (2002: 9-15) for a dramatic account of this

Lay refers of course to the fact that New Order elections were no real competition, just an exercise in reelecting Golkar. He sees election violence as a symptom of the repression of debate. Riswandha Imawan, a political scientist also of Gadjah Mada University emphasizes the social causes of violence in another interview with the Jakarta Post (May 15, 199b). Imawan points out that the same youths often join different rallies, and that the motorcades "are not part of the campaign but nothing more than an excuse for revelry". He argues that the campaigners become violent because they are ultimately frustrated by "limited access to education, negative experiences with rigid bureaucracy and unemployment." Once in five years, the youths are allowed to vent their frustration through destruction with little chance of serious punishment. In the same article, Darmanto Jatman of Diponegoro University adds a third point to the discussion. He believes that "for the youths, speeding on motorbikes or clinging atop the roofs of trucks and busses in a devil-may-care manner gain peer approval. They feel like they're some kind of heroes. They are helping something, someone". Certainly among young people, physical bravado is a good way to win peer approval and have fun. It is part of the "pesta demokrasi" aspect of Indonesian elections. And attacking the hated regime would also win accolades. Jatman emphasizes that the desire to help the underdog is why PDI and PPP had so many active cadres. However, unfortunately, it does not explain why anyone would join the Golkar satgas.

I argue that all three of these observers make valid points, but I think the biggest causes are those listed by Imawan: that disenfranchised youths used the libertine time of the campaign to let loose their frustrations. In my opinion, political problems *and* economic problems must be present for campaign violence. If a person already has enough money, he is less likely to become a thug. There must be economic problems so that there will be a class of actors with nothing to lose in a violent regime change. In fact, these disenfranchised people may hope to benefit from the change and get a better position in life, as the leaders of Jakarta's Revolutionary militias. If, however, most of the people are employed and part of the status quo, they will not take to the streets to change life. It is the young and the unenfranchised who have nothing to lose. At this time, there were too many unenfranchised people in Java.

An interesting case in Yogyakarta will illustrate the grey area between illegal and legal work in security. On May 5, 1997 a man living in Sleman, named Sudihardjo was killed. The *Jakarta Post* (May 14, 1997) reports that he was a Golkar guard and had been implicated in an attack on a local PPP office. The article quotes his son as admitting that his father was a bit of a thug. According to the police in this article, Sudihardjo was a criminal killed in a gang conflict over a protection racket at a bus terminal. The police said that no PPP supporters were under suspicion, though the article claims there was wide speculation that the PPP was behind the murder. The PPP of course, denied involvement, saying that violence is unislamic and that they never get involved in violence. However, an article in the *South China Morning Post* (May 11, 1997) about the same incident also states that the PPP was widely suspected

of a role in the murder. This article calls Sudihardjo a gangster outright. It quotes one of his neighbors saying that Sudihardjo was Golkar's biggest thug on the south side of Yogyakarta, and that he worked for the PDI before that.

Though the reports emphasize different aspects of the story, it is important to note this example of the intersection of the criminal and the satgas worlds. Sudihardjo was not ideologically motivated; he moved between parties. It was most likely, in my opinion, that he was simply a professional enforcer, and one or another aspect of his work made him a powerful enemy.

A Short Case Study: Pemuda Pancasila

The first satgas parpol, I argue, was Pemuda Pancasila (PP). Pemuda Pancasila is almost as old as RI itself, and it has always had a satgas/preman element, but PP began doing political work before there were even competitive elections. Pemuda Pancasila was originally the youth wing of IPKI (*Ikatan Pendukung Kemerdekaan Indonesia*, or League of the Supporters of Indonesian Independence) in 1961 (Ryter 1998: 140). This group's members were usually preman-types, and by definition, young. Like the militia members during the war, many of these men were very poor, disenfranchised and had trouble finding honest employment. Though being a member of PP was not full-time regular work, it was something patriotic and useful to do. Their goal was to promote Pancasila through work and efforts, and in return, get some economic or political protection. One of PP's "efforts" was killing

communists for Suharto in Medan and Aceh in 1965. Again, the government used private means to do illegal public work.

Throughout the 1970s, they lay somewhat dormant. However, in about 1980, under the new leadership of Yapto Soerjosoemarno, the PP woke up. Under their new leader, this organization of "youth" (read: disenfranchised youth), started to expand their work in the informal and semi-formal economy. They did the work of well-organized preman. In the 1980s, the members relied on the organization for "entry into the formal labor market and access to the local administration" (Ryter 1988: 142). That is to say, these preman had some little clout as members of an organization, and a chance at moving into formal, legitimate work. For Ryter, the "genius" of the 1980s PP and its leader was the expansion of this somewhat apolitical organization into a personal tool for Suharto. In effect, PP became a satgas parpol, for Suharto personally. However, PP never had *official* ties to Golkar. It would be unseemly for an organization of gangsters, thugs, debt-collectors, extortionists and bookies to be officially allied to Golkar. It was a militant youth organization doing concrete work to defend and promote Pancasila. But, during the New Order, their clients were always the Army, Golkar, or the Suhartos. The PP worked as security agents to break up protests, to intimidate other political parties, and to intimidate voters. They have been found to provoke unrest so that they can quell it and be heroes (Ryter 1988: 147). These private individuals were used to do "illegal" jobs for the government. So, the state disliked them (as criminals), but found them necessary (as hitmen). Among the people, no one liked satgas (as petty criminals), but sometimes found them necessary (as protection). In return for their work, PP expected certain

concessions from the government, mainly, that their place in the informal or illegal economy remain undisturbed.

In the last 18 years of the New Order, the PP was basically a satgas for hire to the regime. In fact, PP became so entwined with Suharto that in May 1998, they were still supporting him. They thought May 1998 would just be another small incident for Suharto. Thus, when they were shown to be anti-Reformasi, they became unemployable. Suharto was gone, and no new political party wanted to hire the PP as such. Thus PP has gone back to its private organized crime and no longer works much in the public sphere. However, many of its members have joined the satgas of other political parties, per Ryter. Its not about political beliefs, it's about a job.

May 1998, the End of Suharto

In the 1997 parliamentary elections, Golkar again won a majority, but as MPR prepared to sit, Indonesians were becoming more violent in demanding change. The Asian currency crisis had hit Southeast Asia in July 1997. Prices for necessities rose by 50 to 100 percent by March 1998, on the eve of Suharto's reelection. While the people faced a drastic fall in their standard of living, Suharto and his family and cronies continued demanding partnerships in any profitable business, and winning government contracts. This time the people would take no more of Suharto, and masses of protesting students took up posts outside of the MPR building in Jakarta. Other protests went on in other cities.

The students were the public face and the public heroes of 1998, but it was larger social, political, and economic problems that caused Suharto's downfall. From the beginning of 1998, growing groups of students protested against Suharto's presidency. From tens to hundreds to thousands of students protested, especially after Suharto's reelection by MPR acclimation in March. Students were assassinated by the Army at Triatski University and in other protests. Riots began against Suharto-owned businesses. These riots also escalated into the notorious anti-Chinese riots, which may have been 'allowed' by reactionary elements of the military. It is unlikely that middle-class students perpetuated this ethnic violence; it is rather more likely that the atmosphere of unrest was taken advantage of by people with anti-Chinese feelings. But the chaos was the ultimate result of economic problems. Undergoing hyperinflation and witnessing the KKN (*corruption, kollusi dan nepotisme*) of Suharto and his family, Indonesians could no longer take the abuse. It is the students' bravery that finally brought other dissidents into the open. The students were joined by public intellectual Amien Rais, and later even by the army.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have briefly looked at the role of violent political youth groups during the history of the Republic of Indonesia. The violence is mostly perpetrated by the young for several reasons. First, they generally have some education and thus, higher expectations. However, in periods of slow economic growth, they may see few opportunities to join the working world and so vent their frustrations through political violence. Another characteristic of the youth groups discussed here is that they are more impetuous and more interested in immediate change than their older,

more conservative allies. This difference in approach also can lead to schism within a political group between the younger and older factions. The older leaders sometimes have trouble trying to control their partners. Furthermore, the violent youth groups rarely have a very precise political program. They may be for "functional group politics" or against Communism, but they do not propose concrete policies. They rather act out during elections because it is a time when they can, when there is space for it. It's not necessarily the politics that makes the youths fill the streets, but perhaps, rather, just an opportunity to go in the street and vent one's frustrations.

In 1998 Yogyakarta, violence happened on a lesser scale, and one man lost his life. I will discuss the period of *Reformasi* in the next chapter. I will focus on satgas' role and perceptions of themselves. The opposition satgas saw themselves as revolutionaries and guardians of peace in Yogyakarta. The Reformasi period is the focus of my field work and will be discussed in the next chapter. The next chapter will focus on Yogyakarta specifically during the last two elections.

Chapter 3: A Focus on Yogyakarta, 1999 – 2004

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I traced the history of satgas in Indonesia from 1945 until 1998 and discussed their characteristics. Here, I will briefly outline the major political events in Indonesia after Orba. Then, I will introduce the city of Yogyakarta and explain the importance of its history and institutions to political life in the city today. After that, I will give a synopsis of the major political parties and explain which are most popular in Yogyakarta and why.

Overview of National Politics

Suharto stepped down from the office of the President of Indonesia in May 1998; as designed in the Constitution, the vice-president took over the office. Suharto's last vice president was a technocrat named B.J. Habibie.

During Habibie's tenure in office, devolution regulations began to take effect in Indonesia. Under Suharto each of the 33 Indonesian provinces had little local decision-making power. Government was almost completely centralized in Jakarta. Provincial citizens, especially those from resource-rich areas, felt cheated out of revenue, and many citizens from all regions wanted more control over their local government. Suharto, toward the end of his reign began to experiment with giving

budgetary autonomy to certain districts. However, under Habibie, concrete regulations were made for devolution.

Parliament passed devolution legislation, granting regulation-making powers to district and province levels. These Parliaments are called respectively DPD-Is and DPD-IIs (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah [Regional Parliaments]). Under this new power sharing, the "local" parliaments can pass "regulations", with two important checks. First, the national government still takes care of foreign affairs and monetary policy. It also receives 40% of provincial tax revenues. Second, regional "regulations" are less powerful than national law. If the two come into conflict, national law always wins. Devolution has changed the importance of local elections and perhaps the role of satgas. As the place of power shifts from Jakarta to the provinces, provincial elections may be more contentious and characterized by violence, unlike during Orba.

Despite some reforms made under Habibie's watch, this man was very closely linked to Suharto and the government. Though the people had gotten rid of Suharto, many were no happier with his lackey, Habibie. Students and civil society protested for immediate elections instead of waiting until the next planned election. Habibie finally gave into public pressure and called elections for 1999.

The 1999 elections were quite open; the people had a chance to discuss issues, criticize ideas, or just vote for the candidate that had the most entertaining rally. Furthermore, the elections were marred by much less violence than the political

transition of the year before and by less violence than some Orba elections. Budiman participated in election rallies in Jakarta just before the polling. He was amazed at the protestors' *not* vandalizing buildings or stealing snacks. He noted party members giving each other rides and food – except Golkar. Golkar cadres were not welcome in the public circle in front of the Hotel Indonesia. Overall, Budiman said that he was

> "very impressed with the sense of responsibility of the people during the campaign. They demonstrated that when they were given freedom, they would take it seriously with a great sense of responsibility. They were also very tolerant with their political competition except for Golkar." (Budiman 1999: 12)

The 1999 election was still a parliamentary election; the president would be elected by a new parliament. In those elections, the PDI-P got the largest number of popular votes and seats in parliament, with Golkar second, and three Muslim oriented parties next, and a host of smaller parties behind them (see table 2 p. 127). However, once parliament sat, Muslim-oriented parties, in a grouping called the "central axis" allied to elect Abdurrahman Wahid, a cleric from the third-ranked party, as president on October 20, 1999[24].

As might be expected, popular outrage exploded at this miscarriage of the popular vote. Though the MPR was free to lawfully elect who they wished, people did not expect them to go against the popular vote (Prijosusilo 1999). On the night of October 20, some Megawati supporters ran riot in Jakarta, torching the convention center and throwing Molotov cocktails (Richburg, 1999). The mob partially blamed

Amien Rais, the speaker of the MPR, for coordinating the "axis" that elected Wahid president (*JP* October 21, 1999). In Surakarta (Solo), a mob attacked and looted the house of Amien Rais' mother. To avoid trouble at Rais' own house in Yogyakarta, around 70 members of satgas PPP and PAN guarded the house (Ibid.). The satgas PPP members I interviewed in Yogyakarta about this incident said that they helped guard Rais' house because they must overlook politics and do what they can to make the city peaceful. The next day, Megawati was elected vice-president by the MPR; this, along with Megawati's calls for peace eventually calmed the mobs. However, Wahid's presidency would always be dogged by criticism.

For almost the next two years, Wahid was Indonesia's president. However, his opponents criticized him for possible involvement in accepting illegal donations[25], and for being somewhat erratic and a believer in mysticism. Calls for his impeachment began as early as 2000, and by July 2001, two particular scandals, Buloggate and Bruneigate, pushed the MPR toward impeachment. Though some of Wahid's supporters made trouble, the violence in the street was nothing like that which accompanied his election in 1999 (*JP* April 28, 2001; ibid, May 31, 2001). On July 23, 2001, Wahid was removed from the presidency and according to the succession rules in the Constitution, Megawati took over. Megawati would be the Indonesian president for two and a half years.

[24] There are many books about these maneuverings – see O'Rourke's *Reformasi*, for example.
[25] For details of the most serious scandals, Buloggate and Bruneigate, see O'Rourke (2002: 388-391).

During her time in office, Megawati signed one piece of legislation important to this story: electoral reform. Until the 2004 election, on the national level, previously elections had been something like a proportional parliamentary system. Each electoral district had a certain number of seats in national Parliament based on its population. After one round of voting, the seats were divided among the parties based on the percentage of the vote they had received. When parliament sat, it then elected a president. However, under new regulations, the national elections take at least two rounds. The first is a parliamentary election, again a party-list PR system. Based on the results of that election, each party that wins more than 5% of the national tally or at least 3 seats in the DPR is allowed to field a presidential candidate. After that, the party and the candidate select their own vice-presidential candidate. In a second round of voting three months later, voters pick among the presidential tickets. If no team wins more than 50% of that vote, the two top-scoring teams progress to a third and final round of voting[26]. As during Orba, Indonesians hold their national elections regularly every five years.

The time for the next national elections was 2004, and the parliamentary elections took place on April 5 with the results shown in Figure 1 (page 127). Only five parties chose to field presidential tickets.

[26] Indonesians consider their 3-round election the world's biggest democratic exercise – much bigger than India's, because Indians only go to the polls once for each election.

The 1999 and 2004 Elections in Yogyakarta

Background: The City of Yogyakarta

This study takes place in Yogyakarta on the South Central coast of Java. It is situated at the foot of an active volcano. The 800-year old Buddhist site of Borobudur and Hindu site of Prambanan are within an easy taxi ride of the city. Yogyakarta, often called Yogya, was a site of the pre-Islamic Mataram Empire until the empire's decline in the late 15th century. The city's eminence waned until 1755 when a prince who split from the Sukakarta sultans decided to settle in the city and build his *kraton*[27] there. The city still has a Sultan and the 18th century palace where he lives. But the city has more than just geological interest and palace culture. The city's political life is unique in Indonesia due to three factors: the city's active Sultanate, its Revolutionary history, and the universities and huge number of students that make their homes there.

Yogya and its environs are a special administrative district. Since the Revolution, Yogya government has reported directly to Jakarta, rather than having to be part of a larger province. This is seen as a rather special dispensation. The only other special administrative district in Indonesia is Jakarta. As shown on map three (p. 1) the actual city of Yogya is a small area in the Daerah Istemewa Yogyakarta (the Yogyakarta Special District [DIY]). The whole of the DIY is only about 3000 sq. km.

In Yogyakarta, , the Sultanate is important because of the respect the Sultan and his office command. In pre-Republican Indonesia, many chief cities had sultans. However, under the republic, most sultans became private citizens and even their informal power dwindled. However, in Yogya from the time of the Revolution, the sultans have involved themselves in politics as private people, and have worked to maintain their personal fortunes and renown. Thus, Yogyakarta is one of the few Indonesian cities that has a very vibrant, visible Sultanate. Furthermore, due to a dispensation granted during the Revolution, the Yogya sultans are also hereditary governors of the DIY. So aside from their power as district governors, the Sultans of Yogyakarta have worked to make themselves popular public figures. Hamengkubuwono IX was Sultan from 1940 until he passed away in 1988; his throne passed to his son, Hamengkubuwono X.

The Sultans generally enjoy the respect of the people of Yogya; they are proud of the cultural traditions preserved around the Sultan. He is a sort of local hero. However, the Sultan is not above criticism; the people of an urban kampong studied by Guinness were "dismayed in 1977 with the Sultan's public support for the election campaign of . . . Golkar" (1986: 34). Guinness notes, furthermore, that immigrants from outside of the Yogya cultural orbit correspondingly have less interest in *kraton*[28] opinion (1986: 36). These people from other regions[29] tended to think that court-inspired rituals and manners are too specialized and arcane. However, it is safe to

[27] *Kraton* means palace, and was a Sultan's home and center of government.
[28] Kraton is the generic word for "palace"
[29] Sullivan mentions Madurese and Sundanese especially

say that overall, the Sultan is a well-regarded public figure by Yogyanese. The current Sultan, Hamengkubuwono X, especially, has earned his peoples' regard.

Yogyakarta also has a legacy as a patriotic town dating from the Revolution. In 1945, when the Allies reoccupied Indonesia, their headquarters were in Jakarta, and independence negotiations took place there. Republican troops held much of the rest of Java. However, in January 1946, because of the need for a different geographical power base, the Republican government moved its capital to Yogyakarta. In Yogyakarta, the members of government reconnected with the people carrying on the struggle. As Anderson (1972: 301) observed:

> "In a larger perspective Jakarta and Yogyakarta came to symbolize the opposition between *diplomasi* and *perjuangan*. . . If one lived in occupied, cosmopolitan Jakarta, it was hard not to become convinced of the imperative need for diplomacy. But if one lived in unoccupied, traditional Yogyakarta, where scarcely a white face was to be seen, how could one not believe, watching and experiencing the city's turbulent vitality, that resistance was possible and necessary."

The government moved to the city at the Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX's invitation. This won for the Sultanate a reputation for patriotism and republican values. The powers in Yogya were allied to central republican powers. This is also why Yogyakarta was able to get special administrative district status from the central government.

Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX entered republican government as the country's first Minister of War and Internal Security. He was also vice-president under Suharto

from 1973 to 1978. His son, Hamengkubuwono X was a lawyer and a local leader of Golkar from the 1980s. Though he was a Golkar member and many Yogyanese were unhappy about it, his personal prestige has overcome his past association with the party. Hamengkubuwono X gave up his Golkar party functions in the 1990s.

The other important institutions in Yogyakarta are the universities. Yogya has over 40 universities, the most famous being Gadjah Mada University. It is a student town. Because the university students come from all over Indonesia, Yogyakarta also has a quite diverse population. And it is known for tolerance.

In contrast to Jakarta, April and May 1998 were especially calm in Yogya because of the cosmopolitan and tolerant character of the city. Mas'oed, Panggabean, and Azca attribute this character to the "modernization endeavor undertaken [in the city] over the last half century" (2001: 121). They trace this modernization to the 1940s when Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX took a Republican stand, invited the government to sit in the city, and invited Gadjahh Mada University to meet in his palace before they were able to build facilities. By inviting the government to Yogya, Hamenkubueno IX attracted many intellectuals, politicians, artists, and others to the city. By opening his palace to them, he allied with these progressive elements. Furthermore, these people were from all over Indonesia and even other countries. "As a result of all these elements, postcolonial Yogya experienced a parallel nationalization and cossmopolitanization of its resident community" (Mas'oed, et al 2001: 124). In other words, professionals from all over Indonesia were settling in Yogya and would

establish Universities, foundations and civil society groups like no other city in Indonesia. Women activists established the first women's crisis center[30] in Indonesia in Yogya in 1993 (Mas'oed, et al 2001: 131). The kernel organization that joined with the NU and became Syarikat began in Yogyakarta (Wajidi 2004)[31]. Mas'oed, Panggabean and Azca also highlight the active field of Islamic study in Yogya, characterized by for example, a students' study group that grew into a prominent modernist, human-rights-oriented Islamic think-tank called LKIS (Institute for Islamic and Social Studies) (2001: 129). They also note that Amien Rais, a well-regarded intellectual and politician grew from the fertile educational ground of Yogya (2001: 132). In all, Yogya is a University town. About one-quarter of Yogyanese are "directly or indirectly involved in university affairs" (Mas'oed et al 2001: 125). These people are in touch with the open, liberal idealism of many university students. The city caters to a rather idealistic clientele, being full of students, professors, and NGOs. These institutions give the city a different color than any other city in Indonesia.

Yogya in 1998

In early 1998, leading up to Suharto's abdication in May, many cities and towns experienced some sort of violence; Yogya, however, was markedly calm. As recounted before, the first months of 1998 were characterized by growing demonstrations for Suharto to step down, sometimes countered by police, Army, and

[30] See http://www.rifka-annisa.or.id for the organization's website
[31] This book was accessed online and so has no page numbers. The full citation is given in the bibliography under 'internet resources'

Pemuda Pancasila's containment efforts. These demonstrations, joined with the effects of the Asian Currency Crisis, provocateurs, high emotion, ill-will and anger resulted most infamously in the widespread pogroms on Chinese Indonesians in Jakarta. Protesters also burned Suharto-linked businesses, and looted stores belonging to ethnic Chinese people or to Suharto cronies. Even the property of "regular" people who were not targeted was destroyed in the process. However, Yogyakarta was characterized by comparatively little property damage and only one death associated directly with the transition.

Like in other cities, students spearheaded protests against Orba in early 1998, but Yogya did not fall into anarchy because of its tolerant atmosphere. Mas'oed et al. (2001) highlights the fact that in Yogya, there is much less ethnic tension among students because they live among each other. The most common housing for university students in the city is private dormitories, where an absentee landlord rents rooms in his compound to individual students. Anyone who has been to university or who has lived in a student environment knows how casual, open, and liberal that life is: full of people just entering the world and curious about each other. Away from family and tradition, these students make friends among themselves. This helps to explain why there was so little ethnic conflict among students after this kind of housing became the norm in the 1980s (Mas'oed et al 2001: 128). They have no suspicions about each other once they know each other. Besides, they are all generally the same social class: well educated and with enough money to study away from home.

In 1998, the Sultan also publicly called for calm; because he is widely esteemed, people respect his opinion. In May 1998, MPR speaker Amien Rais, Megawati, and Abdurrahman Wahid were enticed to gather in a town called Ciganjur to sign an agreement to call for elections and take part in them peacefully. To enhance the appeal and repute of the agreement, the Sultan was invited to sign it. Indeed, he did sign it and reinforced his image as a peaceful democrat. Furthermore, Novan and Malekewi (1998) credit the Sultan with personally quelling the violence during May 1998 by going through the streets and speaking to the students. They relate one incident in which the Sultan stopped students from burning down a car dealership by climbing up on a car and convincing the students not to choose violent means. So the students left the dealership undisturbed[32].

Now that this background is set, let us examine the parties in Yogyakarta in the post-Suharto period.

The Parties in Yogyakarta in 1999 and 2004

In both 1999 and 2004 the main political parties in Yogyakarta were Golkar, PDI-P, PPP, PKB and PAN. Golkar, despite the fall of Suharto's government and the negative actions associated with it, survived as a party. PDI-P (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan* [Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle]) was the new name of the old PDI. It was the faction headed by Megawati, and thus was the more

legitimate one. PPP was, again, the same as the Orba PPP. The National Awakening Party (*Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*, PKB), had been founded by Abdurrahman Wahid, and was associated with NU-type political beliefs. PAN (*Partai Amanat Nasional* [National Mandate Party]) was new in the 1999 elections.

These five are not the only parties; there are scores of smaller parties that are often splinters from larger parties. They hope for even a small base of support, one or two seats in the national or regional parliaments – to use a metaphor common in Indonesian political discussion, though the splinter parties are small, they are still "horse traders" like the rest of the parties, and hope to barter their support in a coalition for a place in government (Sherlock 2004: 25).

Indonesian political parties must be based on one of two principles: *Pancasila*[33] or Islam. Pancasila is the national, secular Indonesian ideology as formulated by Sukarno in 1952. It is five simple principles which boil down to nationalism, humanism, and belief in one God. From the point of view of Indonesian nationalists, this Pancasila should be the creed of all Indonesians, no matter their religion. Indeed, it seems that Indonesian polytheists or atheists raise little objection to Pancasila's recognition of one God only. In any case, a party that says it is based on Pancasila is a secular party.

[32] That the Sultan went among the people to calm them is not in doubt; however, there is another version of this car dealership story which will be related in the next chapter.
[33] We have seen the word Pancasila before in the Golkar-affiliated satgas 'Pemuda Pancasila'. The choice of that name marks the group as one sincerely dedicated to the principles of Indonesian nationalism.

Islam-based parties in the Indonesian context generally means parties that perhaps advocate a more official role for Islam in official life perhaps or whose legislators can be expected to rely on religiously-derived morals when making laws. Amien Rais, leader of PAN, for example, has said he could never vote to legalize prostitution or gambling, for example, as they are against Islamic principles (Zenzie 1999: 250). In 2002, some PPP delegates to the MPR suggested adding a phrase to the Pancasila that Muslims should be obliged to follow Islamic law (Sherlock 2004: 33). If such a phrase was added to the Pancasila and seriously legislated and enforced by the state, Indonesians would have to contend with the same tangle of double laws as Malaysians have experienced in Kelantan and Terengganu[34]. However, it seems unlikely to happen.[35] First, Indonesia is a unitary, secular state, not a federal Islamic state like Malaysia; so anything as fundamental as implementing sharia would have to be debated on a national level. The PPP itself was probably divided over the policy position (Sherlock 2004: 33), and besides that, the party never drew up any legislative proposals concerning Islamic law. And the party took a major beating in the 2004 elections, perhaps because they may advocate a greater role for Islam in official life. One fairly new party, the PKS (*Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* [Prosperous Justice Party]) does advocate *sharia* and won 7.34% of the national legislative vote in 2004. However, should this party retain its popularity, its only role would be as a swing party (among several others) in parliament. Fundemental political Islam seems far

[34] In those Malaysian states, Islamic parties were voted in in the mid 1990s and they implemented some Islamic laws for Muslims. However all were voted out of power in 2004.

[35] In Aceh, for example, there could be a larger constituancy favoring political Islam, but the election laws in Indonesia are designed against regional-based parties, unlike the federal system in Malaysia. Regional parliament regulations are secondary to national laws in Indonesia.

from the mainstream, though many politicians espouse basic Islamic principles in their work.

With an understanding of the major division between Pancasila- and Islam-based parties, let us review the five main parties that contested the 1999 and 2004 elections.

Golkar

In the 1999 elections, Golkar surprisingly came in second place nationally; in 2004 came in first, but only with 21.6 % of the votes. It is important to remember that for most of Orba, Golkar and Suharto were not as offensive as they were considered at the height of Reformasi. Nostalgia for more prosperous and stable times attracted many voters in the nation to Golkar. Furthermore, Golkar has always been stronger in the Outer Islands than in Java and Bali; the citizens of those islands often credit Orba with bringing more economic growth to their islands. And in 1999 and 2004 legislative elections, the Outer Islands had slight legislative overrepresentation for their population[36] (Sherlock 2004: 9). In 1998 Akbar Tanjung was elected chairman of the party, and had to preside over a difficult fissure between more Muslim-oriented and more nationalist-oriented party members (Zenzie 1999: 254). Furthermore, in 2004, he had to fight charges of corruption in court.

PDI-P

PDI-P (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan* [Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle]) is the Megawati-led faction of the PDI and it is a Pancasila-based party. When in 1996 Suharto tried to install a new PDI party chairman, the party split. In 1997 the Suryadi-led faction, known simply as PDI, was on the ballot. Megawati's faction, called PDI-P, did not appear on the national ballot. Because of this, Megawati's group encouraged their supporters to vote for PPP, as a protest against the government's manipulation of party politics. After 1998, the faction that followed Suryadi withered to obscurity, and Megawati's faction retained the name PDI-P. The PDI-P is perhaps still the most popular party in Indonesia. It is an avowedly secular party and nationalist, and thus can appeal to people of all religions. The party is most popular in Java and Bali rather than in the Outer Islands.

PKB

PKB is NU's "official" political party. During Orba, NU's political group was part of PPP, the Islamic-based opposition party allowed by Suharto. However, by 1984, NU had decided to stop participating in politics as an organization. But the NU reentered politics as PKB in 1998. Other parties founded by other kyai claimed to represent NU in politics; but PKB was the most successful and is seen as the most legitimate (Sherlock 2004: 30). It was led by Abdurrahman Wahid when he was elected president in 1999. It is a Muslim-oriented party that appeals mostly to those observant

[36] The Outer Islands make up about 40% of Indonesia's population, but elected 50% of DPR seats in 1999

Muslim, rural voters in Java who wish to support a Islam-based party rather than a secular one. The PKB is, like NU, associated with more traditional Islam, Islam as it has long been practiced in Java, mixed with some elements of local religion, rather than "modern" forms of Islam more in tune with the international ummah. It is seen as an Islamic-leaning party, but its official ideology is Pancasila, and it is opposed to political Islam (O'Rourke 2002: 344). Its popularity waned extremely between 1999 and 2004 partially because of Wahid's poor showing during his presidency.

PPP

As discussed above, PPP started as an amalgamation of Islamic-oriented parties, engineered by Suharto in 1973. It is still an Islam-based party. During Orba, the PPP was the more staunchly critical of the two opposition parties. One of their parliamentarians, for example, publicly criticized Petrus in a sarcastic way, saying that "the government should begin using secret agents to execute corrupt public officials in the same summary fashion" (Ali Imran Kadir, *JP* July 31, 1983, quoted in van der Kroef 1985: 756).

In 1984, NU decided to stop participating in politics as an organization and so withdrew from PPP. This hurt the party in the next two elections, in 1987 and 1992, when the party only won 16% and 17% of the national vote respectively. However, it survived through Reformasi because

and 45% in 2004. This principle of overrepresentation was adopted at the behest of non-Javanese leaders who claim that the national government contains too many Javanese.

> "it retained some standing as a voice of Islamic interests and because a range of both modernist and traditionalist Islamic leaders who had participated in the party during the Suharto era decided that it was in their best interests to stay with the party rather than find a place in the new Islamic parties" (Sherlock 2004: 32).

Thus the PPP earned and retained credibility though it was created as faux opposition during Orba.

The party seems to have been truly dedicated to reform. For example, after the fall of Suharto in 1998, a special commission of all party representatives was convened to decide on electoral reform and elections in 1999. Of course Golkar had the most seats in this commission and would win anything voted upon. So the PPP threatened a walkout unless decisions were made by debate and consensus rather than voting (Zenzie 1999: 244). In this way, the PPP brought the spirit of Reformasi into the deliberations. Ironically, the "spirit" of Reformasi here depended on *musyawarah*, coming to decisions by discussion and consensus, rather than by the explicitly democratic process of voting[37].

The PKB and PPP are known for clashing with each other because they both portrayed themselves as the Islamic choice, and criticized each other for being un-Islamic (Maryono 1999). Indeed, since NU's 1984 secession from politics and later re-entry, there has been a great rivalry between the parties (O'Rourke 2002: 334). Furthermore, in the 1997 election, PPP and Golkar repeatedly brawled in Java; in the

[37] The Islamic concept of *musyawarah* is well-known in Indonesia and was part of Sukarno's ideas about guided democracy.

whole election season, 273 people died in campaign related violence and traffic accidents (Eklof 1997: 1187).

PAN

Amien Rais, an intellectual from Central Java, founded PAN in 1998. Rais lived in Yogyakarta at the time and was once a lecturer at Gadjah Mada University. The party is more popular in Yogya than in other parts of the country because of the hometown connection, and perhaps because of the intellectual presence in the city. Rais was at the forefront of student protests against Suharto in April 1998. He is considered the first public figure to publicly support the students (O'Rourke 2002: 115). His party and ideas appeal primarily to middle-class modernist Muslims – well educated, practicing Muslims throughout the archipelago. The party supports parliamentary democracy, economic reform and modernism, loosely within a framework based on Muslim morals. The party's official ideology is Pancasila, though PAN is seen as an Islamic party. Rais supports pluralism, and tries to appeal to all segments of society. However, some of his critics argue that Rais is not as much a democrat or secularist as he chooses to appear during elections (Zenzie 1999: 250). Indeed, during my fieldwork in Yogyakarta, I found that many of the middle-class, educated, *nominal* Muslims with whom I spoke did not like Rais. They also doubted his pluralistic claims. They believe he may actually have a more Islamic-oriented agenda than he claims.

One of PAN's special issues is opposition to a role for the military in the government. As discussed before, during Orba, the Indonesian armed forces had guaranteed, appointed representation in the MPR. Those seats for the military have since been eliminated. However, the concept of dwifungsi is still alive in the Army. As discussed above, dwifungsi is the concept that the Army has not only the job of physically protecting the country, but also of overseeing civilian government. Army officers are still seconded to oversee individual officeholders all over the country. Rais' party opposes dwifungsi and militarism in all forms. It may seem a paradox that such a party employs satgas, but as we will see in the next chapter, PAN satgas are very un-militaristic. They do not call themselves a "satgas" for example. They call themselves a "logistical support team".

Partai Demokrat

The *Partai Demokrat* (Partai Demokrat [PD]) owes all of its popularity to having been joined by Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. Yudhoyono, or SBY, as he is always referred to, is a retired General and former Minister of Security under Megawati. His resignation from Megawati's cabinet in 2004 drew lots of media attention and made SBY more of a household name. He is under no suspicion of human rights violations, though many Indonesians are suspicious of any military candidate.

The PD was founded by a professor at the University of Indonesia in October 2001, but was just another "small party" until SBY joined. The party's deputy secretary-general, Ponti Pandean, says his party is "an alternative for people from all walks of life" who are disappointed with the current situation and the internal struggles found

in large, established, political parties like Golkar (*JP* Feb 21, 2004). The PD argues that the bigger, older political parties are too concerned with sharing the spoils of government than with reform. SBY has promised to tackle corruption, restore peace in the country, and focus on economic growth. On the negative side, some Indonesians fear that SBY, as a former general, rather than an academic or politician, may not tackle problems with militarism in the country. The army is in need of reform, and dwifungsi is not popular, and SBY may not put priority on these problems as much as many people would like. But, then again, many others like his message of security and growth and are willing to risk government led by a former general. In the final round of the 2004 presidential election, SBY beat Megawati by 60% to 39% of the votes. In any case, SBY beat Megawati , this shows disappointment with Megawati and a willingness to try SBY.

The most striking difference between electoral results in DIY and the country as a whole is the popularity of PAN. Had the 2004 national election results mirrored those of

Table 2: 1999 and 2004 Indonesian Parliamentary Election Results

Major Parties, % of Total

	1999		2004	
	National	Yogya DIY	National	Yogya DIY
PDI-P	33.7	35.7	18.5	26.2
Golkar	21.9	14.3	21.6	13.9
PKB	12.6	14.3	10.6	10.1
PPP	10.6	4.9	8.2	4.9
PAN	7.1	17.3	6.4	17.8
PD	-	-	7.4	5.6

Data calculated from official election results taken from the *Komisi Pemilu Umum*, the Public Election Commission. Available at www.kpu.go.id

Yogyakarta, the national government could have been dominated by a PDI-P/PAN coalition. This outcome would have been a major break from Orba continuities. As Nordholt and Samuel (2004) argue, a whole political system cannot change very quickly, and there will be continuities between Orba and post-Suharto Indonesia. However, the election results for DIY show that that area is ready to start to change faster. The voters there rejected Golkar, the most obvious holdover from Orba politics, as much as they had in 1999.

PKB, and PDI-P declined in Yogya between 1999 and 2004 for several reasons. First, the new Partai Demokrat and the PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera [Prosperous Justice Party]), both new, clean-seeming parties took votes from old parties. Second was PKB / Abdurahhaman Wahid's poor showing as president in 1999 – this performance lost votes for the party.

Party Interaction 1999 to 2004

Between 1999 and 2004 Yogya saw a major decline in election-related violence. In the 2004 campaign period, there were no satgas-related deaths (2001) or murders (1999, 2002) as discussed in my Introduction. The major reported infractions were carrying weapons or damaging property: using anything from swords to crossbows to machetes, to break car windows or knock down food stands. So, mercifully, we are dealing with a smaller problem in Yogya. In February 2004, Amien Rais gave a speech at the National University of Singapore, and allowed a question-and-answer session at the end. I was able to ask Mr. Rais his prognosis for election violence.

Optimistically, he said that politics in Indonesia were becoming less and less violent and that the 2004 would not be violent except perhaps some young people fighting in the street which cannot be controlled – 210 million people over 5,000 miles cannot be controlled so tightly. His prognosis proved correct for Yogya, but not for other provinces, such as East Java, just beside DIY.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced three factors that are a major part of Yogyakarta's political culture: the Sultanate, the universities, and the city's Revolutionary history. These three aspects of Yogya life have acted as moderating forces in the city's political expression. Yogya has had the good fortune to have rather thoughtful, intelligent, humanistic men as its last two Sultans; these men have tried to make themselves representatives of all the people, not patrons of any one faction. True, HB X and HB IX were Golkar members, and they did draw criticism for it, but they were never extremists. The city's historical republican role is due to HB IX's support of the Revolution. If cities have a "character", Yogya's is patriotism.

Second, the university communities tend to foster an environment that advocates dialogue rather than discord. Yogya university graduates have founded NGOs and think-tanks that try to promote tolerance in the city. Like in other cities, university students are first to take to the streets in protest; however, in Yogya, perhaps because it is a liberal college town, or because race relations are comparatively relaxed, these demonstrations are less likely to end in violence than in other cities.

Furthermore, it has discussed the most important parties in Yogyakarta during the 1999 and 2004 elections. The PAN is disporportionally popular in Yogya compared to the rest of Indonesia, and Golkar is disporportionally unpopular in the city. Though the PPP has the worst history of brawling, DIY is still a more peaceful province than most in Indonesia.

Chapter 4: Yogyakarta's Satgas Speak

Introduction

Having thoroughly explored the background of satgas in Indonesian history and the political events of the last ten years, I will now show the satgas as I saw them and let them speak for themselves. These interviews showed several changes and continuities within satgas. First, there is a difference of self-perception or role between satgas of old parties (PPP, PDI-P) and new parties (PAN). The former have inherited institutional traditions and esprit. The latter see themselves solely as logistic support. Second, the leadership of the old party satgas know they have a "public image" problem and try to move away from that image. The leadership does not want to appear as thugs; in fact, they are rather sensitive about that label. Third, the old party satgas leadership says that they never wanted to use violence, but the *fight* against Orba demanded it. The PPP, especially, paint themselves as old revolutionaries, saying that they had the courage to fight when few others did. Following that, all party satgas now say that they eschew violence because the Reformasi era is a time for working together.

Caveats

In Yogyakarta, I interviewed leaders of satgas PDI-P, PPP, PAN and a police commissioner in charge of relations with satgas. I wished to speak to the police to get an idea of the state's view of satgas. During Orba, the police had close relations with

satgas, going at least as far back as Petrus. So it's important to hear their comments. Of course, when I called and asked for interviews, each organization matched me with some sort of spokesman or person of rank; I was speaking to the men with whom they wanted me to speak. No one said anything very critical or unconstructive. All informants wanted to make their organizations look as good as possible. I cannot emphasize enough the fact that I was receiving official public relations statements and the best possible view of the satgas and police. When relating the statements of the interviewees, I state their views in present tense and without qualifications. It would be monotonous to write "according to Mr. Z" in every sentence. Thus, the first qualification is here. A more complete critique of my data will follow below.

In this chapter, I will examine each satgas and the police one by one. First, in each section I will briefly give my impressions of the satgas. I was able to better understand the parties, their members, and their ideas by observing their surroundings. Then I will discuss the content of the interviews. Next, I will review any corroborating evidence for or against my interviewees' answers. It is important to hear both sides of a story, especially in a case like this. The satgas are seen by the press and middle class as negative, violent thugs. But the satgas members themselves say that they are not bad at all. It's difficult to know which to believe, and the truth probably lies somewhere in between. Thus, it is

A Note on Language

Standard Indonesian (*Bahasa Indonesia)* is the medium of education, government, and business throughout Indonesia. The language is used in formal situations or among people with different mother tongues. However, many people feel more able to express themselves in their "home" language – in this case, Javanese. Some interviewees used Javanese, some used Bahasa Indonesia.

important to cross-check statements so we know which are more believable. Finally, in the last section, I will explain my conclusions about the changing role of satgas.

PDI-P

I had a specific street address for the Yogya PDI-P office where I was to meet Pak[38] Seno on July 1, 2004. The taxi went slowly, looking for the number, and he stopped in front of a red cinderblock building that looked like a closed shop. The windows and doors were covered by aluminum shutters; there was no one stirring; there were no PDI-P banners. However, the taxi stopped, and my translator peeked behind a red gate, cracked open just a little. He knocked on a side door and found out Pak Seno was inside. I came into the yard. It was decorated with PDI-P paraphernalia; a man with a PDI-P t-shirt slept under a tree. I went into the building.

The foyer contained stacks of old newspapers, an old desk and mats on the concrete floor. A young man showed me into a room with a red wall, a red naugahyde couch, a coffee table, and a TV showing a soccer match. (The party's color is red.) Pak Seno entered the room, greeted me warmly and sat on a small chair. He motioned for the young man to turn off the TV. We introduced ourselves and made a little small talk. Pak Seno is probably in his early forties, regular size, and a little round. His broad grin revealed a few missing teeth. When I shook his hand, I found it to be calloused, used to manual work. Pak Seno said he had liked PDI-P since he was "very young" and eventually became active because he wanted to express nationalism.

Before the interview properly began, Pak Seno called in one of his associates, Mas Danil. Mas Danil looked young but said he had been with the party since 1982. He was tall and skinny, and wearing a sweater that swallowed him. He shook my hand with a soft intellectual's hand. Pak Seno and Mas Danil began smoking and kept it up during the interview. The two men spoke Javanese at least half of the time.

Before I could start asking my formal questions, Pak Seno said he wanted to make a first statement. He said that Orba satgas were about militarism, but in 1999 the paradigm had changed to help not only the party but also to help society.

Pak Seno is the Secretary of the PDI-P DPC (Dewan Pimpinan Cabang [The Board of Directors]) of the city of Yogyakarta. He is not the head of the satgas *per se*, but he was recommended by the central Yogya PDI-P office as a good contact man knowledgeable about the party. Mas Danil said he is a member of satgas PDI-P, City of Yogya section. Mas Danil is clearly formally educated. When he wanted to make a point very clear, he spoke Indonesian. He laid out, almost by bullet point, the differences between old and new satgas, speaking of "psychological and structural changes".

Structurally, Satgas PDI-P has made some changes since 1999. Satgas PDI-P Yogyakarta had been known as *Pasanda* in the latest literature I had read (King 2000:

[38] *Pak* is short for "father" in Indonesian and is used as a term of address for men older than oneself. Later

41), but they have since decided not to have a specific name. They refer to themselves simply as Satgas PDI-P. It is one of the "psychological" changes they wish to make; they want to emphasize that satgas are just part of the party, under the control of the party, not a separate organization. In the city of Yogya (the city, not the whole DIY district), they have about 400 to 600 members. In DIY there is one coordinator[39] whose direct subordinates are the coordinators of the city of Yogya and the other kabupatens in the district (see table 3, p. 175). The coordinators are specifically called "coordinators" to avoid any militaristic language. The coordinators are selected by musyarwarah – discussion and consensus.

In DIY, the satgas are well-coordinated with each other according to Pak Seno. If there is a large job, the district satgas coordinator can call on all of the satgas in the district and also call his counterparts in other districts and ask for their help. Mas Danil says that this is a change since Orba. Then, each district organization had its own "personality" and they might not work well together. But now, the satgas are more hierarchically organized and nationally-run. They have become more regular cadres than irregulars.

Membership rules have also gotten tighter in the last ten years, according to my informants. First, members must be under forty, healthy and not "use or distribute" drugs. They sign a pledge to this effect, and also pledge to obey the national constitution and the rules of PDI-P. They also pledge to work for free. Again, the

we will see *Mas*, the term for addressing men nearly of one's own age.

leadership is trying to move away from an image of criminality by taking a stand against drugs. They also want their members to be able to say they are honest volunteers, not rent-a-mobs working for the highest bidder. In PDI-P, being a satgas member is said strictly to be a volunteer activity, not a full time job. Most days, there is nothing for satgas members to do anyway. They only work when they are needed. Satgas PDI-P members may receive some small gifts (BI: *oleh-oleh*) when volunteering, such as food, or free T-shirts, but according to Pak Seno, the freebies are never excessive, only tokens from the party.

In order to ensure that the satgas are under control, satgas members must be card-carrying party members. Under Orba, according to Mas Danil, some people were part-time party sympathizers. They were neither in nor out of the party, and thus only appeared at election time, or caused trouble because of lack of discipline. Now Satgas PDI-P only wants members dedicated to the party and willing to follow its rules.

According to my interviewees, as party and satgas members, cadres under the Reformasi era have three jobs: first, helping the police with security and orderliness in the street; second, organizing turnout for party events; and third, taking a new, positive social role.

[39] In Bahasa Indonesia: *koordinator*.

First, when there are public events, be they political events or not, satgas want to help the police with security and orderliness. Pak Seno said that the police are physically able to do their job, but that it is smoother when satgas help handle security – because the people do not trust the police. They see themselves as an honest broker between police and people. Pak Seno and Mas Danil agree that officers are more professional now than during Orba, but that it only takes one bad officer to mistreat the public and cause trouble.

Furthermore, Satgas PDI-P wants to work on public and private crowd-control projects to show that they are "well socialized, not militaristic". For example, they may help direct traffic at a large wedding or funeral – always at the invitation of the host, according to Pak Seno. For these services, the satgas members can expect to receive some token of appreciation in the way of gas, food or some money.

Second are the satgas' party functions: security and "motivation". As security officers, Satgas PDI-P members will be present at any party meeting, usually patrolling outside. For example, in 2001, DPC PDI-P Yogyakarta met for an internal election to choose the party's mayoral candidate. The party feared a divisive election and so called Pak Seno to arrange tight security; no one was to be allowed in without an invitation. When the DPC chairman arrived, he did not have his invitation; he had not received it. So he was turned away. The chairman was not a divisive figure, he just did not have his invitation, and Pak Seno enforced the rule literally (*Bernas*, July 17, 2001). So this is an example of an "internal party security" function.

As grass-roots party supporters, satgas cadres also help spread news of party events and motivate supporters to participate. They have a tree of contacts: the district coordinator calls his subordinates with any news, and that communication gets passed down all the way to village level. The satgas members or sympathizers who live in each village can then pass the party's message to individuals by word of mouth.

Third, is the satgas' new, positive "social role". Pak Seno gave me two examples of what his satgas are learning to do. First, they want to become disaster-relief workers. Second, they are taking part in a tree-planting campaign. They have set up some admirable, civic-minded goals.

As satgas members, the cadres do not have any special position in the party. Regular satgas cadres do not take part in policy-making or decision-making anymore than any other rank-and-file PDI-P member. Their job is just to take instructions.

Mas Danil and Pak Seno both admit that Satgas PDI-P has a bad reputation; that press reports call them thugs. In fact, they argue that Satgas PDI-P have never been "thugs", but instead people that suffered and had the courage to be satgas when politics was still a violent struggle (as under Orba). For their sacrifices, the newspapers called them *gali-gali*. In other words, they lionize their satgas during Orba as freedom fighters but feel that they were and still are condemned by the press for their courage.

When we discussed specific incidents of PDI-P *premanism* after Orba, Pak Seno admitted that of course the satgas have not yet been able to completely transform their organization yet. He said that there are honest cadres who still want to carry weapons, for example, but that the party and other satgas members try to help these men to "change their ways" by persuasion. Intellectuals have gotten involved with satgas to teach them about image problems and Reformasi politics. (I believe Mas Danil is one of these intellectuals.) Furthermore, Satgas PDI-P neither orders, nor encourages, nor excuses any acts of violence, intimidation, or weapons-carrying. If these things happen, they are either not satgas members, or cadres who have acted on their own account, according to Pak Seno.

Mas Danil also mentioned, somewhat bittersweetly, that satgas are becoming more professional and losing their "heart". During Orba, dedicated satgas members worked because of what they felt in their heart, be it opposition to Suharto or support for Megawati or nationalism. However, since 1998, Mas Danil feels that some people have joined satgas just for "advancement" in the party or community. On the one hand, that results in a more professional organization, which is the ideal, but the changes cause a loss of elan or camaraderie within the organization.

In the end, I asked the men what else I should know about Satgas PDI-P. Mas Danil immediately replied with three bullet points: that Satgas PDI-P is not militaristic, that

they have a new paradigm of being a peaceful organization, and that they are socializing themselves by helping the police and working in the community.

With that, I took my leave of Pak Seno and Mas Danil. As I left the building, I saw some probably university-age cadres, both men and women, in another room, sitting on a mat, doing paperwork and eating snacks. Outside, the same man was still having his siesta under a tree. The shutters on the building were still closed.

Pak Seno and Mas Danil were remarkably easy to talk to and polite and open. Their manner was quite affable, like one's older brothers' friends. We had no ceremony, no distance, and I came away thinking these men were the epitome of "regular" guys. However, they were glossing a bit. While I believe that elements of Satgas PDI-P are trying to move toward civility, I also found evidence of backsliders.

For example, on March 31, 2004, *Kompas* reported PDI-P campaign events around Yogyakarta city, and it seems the police were looking for anyone with weapons. Several PDI-P "sympathizers" were arrested in Kotagede for attacking a PPP *posko*[40] and beating up a local citizen. An officer attempted to arrest a "known PDI-P sympathizer" for carrying a sickle in the procession, but he was mobbed before he could make the arrest. PDI-P sympathizers also kicked over police motorcycles. After these events, the police searched some cars and found "30 bladed weapons" in their sweep. The head of PDI-P's DPD delegation said that those events had nothing

to do with party satgas; he had had no report of such an incident from satgas leaders. Two weeks earlier, four PDI-P sympathizers were arrested for carrying a 60 centimeter knife to a campaign function in the city of Yogyakarta (*SM*, March 18, 2004).

Part of giving up militarism is giving up a militaristic uniform; perhaps satgas PDI-P Yogya is doing that. At least once they guarded Megawati wearing batik (*Kompas*, April 26, 1999).

The party's official line is that they want a peaceful election. I believe that satgas leadership honestly agrees. They know in Yogya especially, tourist money is important, and no one wants to scare away tourists. I believe that some of the cadres held for bringing weapons to PDI-P events may be loners acting on their own. As far back as 1952, plain thugs were co-opting the satgas name (p.63). Perhaps young people who might want to have a little trouble so that they can prove their "pemuda consciousness" – so that they can measure up to the pemuda that came before them, as van Dijk argues (p. 47). Furthermore, if the press is anti-satgas as my intervewees suggest, journalists would be sure to note if the weapons were carried by satgas members. These articles do not say the suspects are "party members" or "satgas", only that they are "sympathizers" (*simpatisan).* However, it is hard to believe that "30 bladed weapons" were gathered by thirty loners acting together. Perhaps some

[40] A *posko* is a *pos kommande*, or command post. They are tiny three-sided rooms or pavillions along the road where party members can gather. All parties have them.

satgas rank and file, or at least some organized people would have collected that armory.

Now, having met PDI-P, let us proceed to PPP.

PPP

I was to meet Pak Bambang at "the PPP office on Mataram Street" on July 2, 2004 – no further specification was available. I gave these vague directions to my taxi driver and he drove down the street; we could not find the place, so he stopped and asked a food-seller on the sidewalk where it was. "Close by on the right", I heard. Sure enough, we soon came upon a green mosque complex decorated with green PPP banners. Though it had no sign, that was the place.

In the complex was a mosque in a courtyard surrounded by small open rooms. Inside the first room, I inquired for Pak Bambang. He was there, greeted me warmly and led the way to a large, unused office – with some green couches. The office looked to have been built and furnished in the 1960s with an aluminum desk and chairs. Its floor was tiled and swept clean. The windows faced the street. Pak Bambang left and returned with an older man wearing a white peci[41] and a young man with a tray of drinks. The young man left us, the men began smoking clove cigarettes, and we began our interview.

[41] A peci is a white cap indicating a man has made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Pak Bambang is the PPP satgas trainer for the city of Yogyakarta. He looks to be in his early fifties. The Hajji was Pak Sulaeman, Commandant of satgas PPP for all DIY. Sulaeman seemed to be in his sixties or even older. His wrinkled skin told of a life spent under the sun. He has been with the party and its satgas since 1973, the year of its foundation. He has been the Commandant since 1990.

I began with straightforward questions about satgas structure and activities; Pak Bambang answered my questions while Pak Sulaeman smoked silently. However, as I began to ask more about satgas history, Sulaeman decided to also give answers himself. Pak Bambang deferred to Sulaeman; if I asked an interesting question, Sulaeman motioned toward Bambang with his hand and the younger man remained quiet. Sulaeman would ruminate, then lean toward Bambang and whisper an answer to him. Bambang would then repeat the answer before giving his own thoughts. Whether Pak Sulaeman wanted to cultivate an air of sagacity, or just had a sore throat, I do not know. But he came across as a veteran of war would; of a man who has much worldly experience. They spoke in a mix of Javanese and Indonesian.

The party satgas is called the *Gerakan Militan Ka'abah,* "the Militant Ka'abah Movement" (GKM). The Ka'abah is the holy building in Mecca toward which Muslims face when they pray and the physical destination of the Hajj pilgrimage. It is also the PPP's political symbol. The GKM seems to be the newest manifestation of satgas PPP; it was launched in Sleman (outside of Yogya) in 2001 (*JP*, April 16, 2001). The name emphasizes PPP's Islamic focus, but the word "militant" is

intimidating. In the city of Yogyakarta, they have about 300 members; in all of DIY, including the city, they have about 2,000 members.

Structurally, the top of the GKM hierarchy ends at the district level; there is no national coordinator and no formal coordination among district commandants. Below the district, there are commanders down to the kelurahan level of government. Within DIY, my interviewees report that the different commanders throughout the district work together well. On each level, cadres chose their leaders by musyarwarah. The GMK is a part of PPP's "youth division". The GKM's biggest structural problem for the future is finding good leaders that can work with the people as easily as with politicians other leaders.

There are three steps to becoming a GMK member. First, there is an open registration, and many come to register, not just PPP members. Next, the registrants undergo training in discipline, religion and PPP's "vision and mission" (BI: *visi dan misi*). Those that succeed in the training are chosen to join the GMK. If a successful applicant is not a PPP member, his is automatically made a party member by virtue of being in the GMK.

Being a GMK member is purely voluntary and part-time. Like Satgas PDI-P, GMK are not needed every day – only at gatherings. They also work for free, though they may also receive small tokens or *oleh-oleh* from party funds. There is very little funding for security, however, so they work as volunteers. For example, GMK

members must buy a uniform, and the party only subsidizes 50% of the cost. But, Pak Bambang adds, having to invest money in the organization makes the members more dedicated stakeholders.

In between party activities, members get further training as above, in discipline, religion, and PPP vision and mission. As very well-vetted party members, GPK are qualified, dedicated people. As such, they contribute opinions, suggestions and ideas to the party.

When there are party events, the GMK has two jobs: first, to gather people, second, to make both participants and non-participants feel secure. To do this, they coordinate with the police.

Bambang and Sulaeman admit that during Orba, PPP satgas were very rough and dangerous. Their party was always under pressure from the government to be compliant. The PDI-P also attacked and threatened them. Thus the satgas needed to cultivate toughness; they needed to look scary to defend themselves in a high-pressure environment. They wore military-style uniforms (as all Orba satgas did).

According to Sulaeman, whether or not satgas PPP was violent depends on one's point of view of the violence. Orba leaders called satgas PPP violent, but in Sulaeman's opinion, Orba was more violent, but in different ways: by corruption, by exploiting the people, and by running a corrupt police force, for example. Sulaeman

does not deny having done violence anymore than an army would deny it. But like an army, he feels they were fighting a greater evil: the Orba government.

In May 1998 when Suharto was forced out of office by protesters demanding reform, satgas PPP finally felt that they could have a constructive role in society. In fact, in 1998 and 1999, Satgas PPP had more members than it does now because that was the high point of peoples' Reformasi spirit, when they wanted to join an organization and help the movement.

In 1998 and 1999 satgas PPP helped secure the city of Yogyakarta; they wanted to prevent the massive violence seen in other cities. Satgas PPP (for they were not GMK yet) patrolled the streets, working with university students especially. In Jakarta in May 1998, university students did not feel safe leaving their campuses when the police were patrolling. However, in Yogya, satgas PPP helped escort students home if they felt scared. Above (p. 118), I mentioned an incident where the Sultan of Yogyakarta went among the student protesters in May 1998 and convinced them not to destroy property. Satgas PPP says they did the same thing. Pak Bambang and his men were patrolling the streets when he saw some students breaking into a Timor car dealership to burn it down[42]. The dealership shared a block with some houses, and PPP did not want to see the houses destroyed. So, they convinced the students to move the cars outside to burn them but leave the building standing. Pak Bambang emphasized the students' determination to show their anger,

and so he thought they should simply burn cars but not risk damaging peoples' houses. He acknowledged that property would be destroyed, and it was best just to try and limit the damage to legitimate targets. I asked if it would have been better for the students to keep the cars and use them for their movement. But Pak Bambang said no, that the students must have an opportunity to show their displeasure. Novan and Malekewi (1998) may corroborate this story; they mention that one of the few incidences of property destruction being burning the contents of a Timor car dealership in the street (though they attribute the safety of the building to the Sultan).

Pak Bambang and Pak Sulaeman also told me that during the 1999 MPR session they guarded the house of Amien Rais, the leader of PAN when he was the target of mob violence (p. 110). This story is corroborated by the *Jakarta Post* (October 21, 1999).

Satgas PPP also helped guard the crowds at the funeral of Moses Gatutkaca, the sole person to die as a result of May 1998 protests in Yogyakarta. University students organized a funeral, and according to Pak Bambang, the students asked Satgas PPP to guard the funeral. The students needed crowd control, but were too distrustful to turn to the police. According to Pak Bambang, he approached the

Illustration 2: Satgas PPP at the funeral of Moses Gatutkaca. Photo by the Associated Press

[42] Timor car company is owned by the very co
dealerships were targets of violence throughou

police with a proposal to guard the funeral. But the police were hostile to him for supporting the students. They almost dared him to take responsibility for the funeral. They finally threatened him, pointed a gun at him, and said "if anything goes wrong at this funeral, you will pay".

In fact the funeral of Moses Gatutkaca was peaceful. The *Jakarta Post* (June 14, 1998) attributes it to the Sultan's plea for calm. However, an Associated Press photo clearly shows satgas PPP in militaristic uniforms carrying Gatutkaca's coffin.

Pak Bambang and Pak Sulaeman even helped the police during the rough years of 1998 and 1999. Because the officials were so exhausted and so unpopular, in May 1999, they called all satgas leaders together to ask for help with day-to-day police work. But only Satgas PPP was civic-minded enough to help the hated police, according to the interview.

With regard to goals, Satgas PPP has not changed since Orba: their job has always been to provide security for party events and help achieve the aims of the party and of the people. But since 1998, they have been able to change their tactics. For example, they want to appear more friendly. They have changed their uniforms to something less paramilitary. They have a new slogan that they teach to cadres: *Senyum, Sapa, dan Salaam* means "smile, a greeting, and *salaam*", the well-known Arabic word for "hello". Pak Sulaeman says it is time for Satgas PPP to retire from the physical struggle and just be security guards, that it is time for them

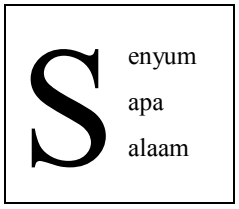


Illustration 3: Satgas PPP's new motto

to show their "human side" (BI: *lebih humanis*). They too are getting involved with civic activities such as public health work and environmental work.

Pak Sulaeman and Pak Bambang seem a little resigned about their bad reputation. They say during Orba, people turned to them for help because they police could not be trusted. In 1998 and 1999 too, they showed how reliable and civic-minded they were. But now, they have a bad reputation due to the proliferation of bad, unprofessional satgas from other parties. Before, Satgas PPP had a reputation as a "Godfather" among satgas, but that memory is forgotten by Yogyanese, they say. However, Pak Sulaeman mentioned that *foreigners* seem to know and appreciate Satgas PPP because reporters and writers from Thailand, Australia, Japan, and Malaysia had come to interview him to ask the recipe for a good satgas.

When I asked them for any final thoughts on satgas PPP that I should know, Pak Sulaeman replied that "a party with no satgas makes no sense because satgas gives the party color".

In all, GMK has a stronger corporate identity within the party than Satgas PDI-P. The GMK has a name, first of all. Next, the GMK takes its members from the public and makes them PPP members. The GMK members also seem to be more than just rank-and-file cadres; as Pak Sulaeman said, as well-vetted men, GMK members contribute ideas and opinions to party debate. Also, Pak Sulaeman's sheer longevity

in the organization may make him feel a great corporate identity which would show in his answers.

And indeed, Pak Sulaeman and Pak Bambang seem civil, and I have examples in which Pak Sulaeman was a public spokesman for PPP against corruption. First, he and another PPP Yogya city comrade publicly demanded the resignation of a party leader that had been convicted of corruption (*Kompas*, March 21, 2003). Sulaeman also headed a PPP team in 1996 that independently investigated the murder of a local journalist, Fuad Muhammad Syafruddin (*SPD*, September 18, 1996). The journalist was seen as a martyr; he wrote articles detailing financial corruption in a regency in DIY, and many people thought he was killed for that reason. The police never convicted anyone of the crime.

However, Pak Sulaeman may be civil, and his words may be conciliatory, but there is still a definite problem with Satgas PPP, and PPP supporters.

According to the *Jakarta Post*, Sleman area citizens were wary when PPP decided to have a rally in their neighborhood; they were worried about violence. The local police commander dispatched 1,160 officers to the area. Apparently, after the rally broke up, a car windshield was broken and a restaurant was damaged by the party supporters (*JP*, April 16, 2001).

A group of youths "appearing to be PPP supporters" attacked a group of PDI-P supporters in Yogyakarta, resulting in one PDI-P supporter being stabbed to death in 1999 (*JP*, March 22, 1999). In response to this incident, party leaders in Yogyakarta signed a peace agreement called the "Malioboro Declaration", and pledged to control their supporters. However, a month later, another PDI-P supporter was stabbed to death in a clash with PPP supporters on a street that is a "PPP stronghold" (*JP*, April 26, 1999). Sultan HBX strongly denounced the parties and said he personally would demand an explanation (Ibid).

Later, in 2002, another series of clashes between satgas PPP and PDI-P left at least one man dead and houses and properties damaged and burnt. The clashes were said to have been the fault of PPP. The *Jakarta Post* (February 25, 2002) notes that often local police are afraid to investigate inter-party conflict as suspects are protected by their own parties. Party leaders on both sides claimed this was not a party-sanctioned fight, and that the parties were at peace with each other. A police representative said that parties must be more selective in picking satgas members that will not use the organization as a personal gang. This implies that the people involved in these clashes were known satgas. Both the police and the parties implied that these were rogue satgas, using the organization to settle their own scores.

In another interesting case, in 2000, a student named Suradji from the State Islamic Institute, Sunan Kalijaga was kidnapped by a radical Islamic group for having written something in the student newspaper that was allegedly insulting to Islam. The

interesting thing is that the Islamic group, Front for the Defense of Islam (FPIY), is said to have "shady links" with the PPP (Berita Indonesia, august 21, 2000, "FPI Thugs Abduct Student Press Activist"). Also interesting is that the student's colleagues asked for protection from further attacks from Banser, the NU's youth group. It does not seem that FPIY is directly linked to PPP or GMK, but it does show that those parties probably have contact with more radical elements.

Satgas PPP epitomizes the blurry line between public and private security in Indonesia. They, rather than the police, were approached to guard the public funeral of Moses Gattukaca. They took to the street to prevent violence in 1998, and guarded Amien Rais' house. However, they also protect their members from police investigations. They also decide for themselves if someone deserves a punishment. They were correct to identify Orba as an enemy, but post-Reformasi, a private group should not enforce its idea of the law on others.

Now, we will meet the satgas of a new party, Amien Rais' PAN.

PAN

Pak Rudi told me to meet him 200 meters north of Tom's Silver Shop in Kotagede. Everyone knows Tom's Silver Shop, and the wide road leading north from it. July 1, 2004, I set out. One hundred, two hundred, three hundred meters north of Tom's Silver, there was no PAN office – not that I had been told the meeting would be in an

office, but I supposed it would. Again, the taxi driver asked a food seller on the sidewalk for the PAN office. She said it was on the road leading northwest of Tom's Silver. So, we went there, and were faced with a new, big sign in front of the PAN office. The office is a fine building in a former house, perhaps a restored colonial-era home. It is set back from the road and has a clean paved yard ringed with potted plants. I asked the gardener for Pak Rudi; he told me to inquire inside.

I stepped into a large room with high ceilings and shining tile floors. A few office workers were gathered around their desks and computers, gathering their things to go home. These people were far from the jeans-wearing, chain-smoking men I had already interviewed. They were dressed like office workers from any cubicle in the world; men in pressed shirts and trousers; women in business suits with *jilbabs*[43]. I asked them for Pak Rudi. They told me he was working, guarding a party meeting being held at the Muhammadiyah office – 200 meters north of Tom's Silver Shop.

Around the corner I went, to the Muhammadiyah office. It was a fine new building, two stories tall. I asked the man standing at the gate for Pak Rudi; but Pak Rudi had already seen me and was coming to greet me. He and the gatekeeper and a few other men were wearing their satgas uniform: grey trousers, medium blue oxford shirts, wingtip shoes, and, with a nod to their task, black vests with many pockets.

[43] A *jilbab* is a woman's head scarf that covers just the hair, ears, and neck.

Pak Rudi greeted me warmly and escorted me to a meeting room upstairs. Young men were finishing the preparations for the evening's meeting: setting up chairs and testing microphones. Pak Rudi brought me a plate of the snacks that had been prepared for the meeting and we began our interview, almost completely in Indonesian.

Pak Rudi has been with PAN almost since it was founded in 1998. Before that, he was an active PPP supporter, but he decided the PPP was too polarizing and he thought Amien Rais was a better Reformasi leader than anyone in PPP, so he changed parties. Pak Rudi is officially the Chief Commander of Satgas PAN for DIY; the organization has about 60 members in the city.

However, satgas PAN does not use the word "satgas" – they do not want to have a satgas in the common sense. Instead, they have *SYMPATIK*, which means "congenial" in Indonesian. SYMPATIK is an acronym meaning "Peacemaking and technical activities system" (*Sistem Pengamanan dan Teknik Kegiatan*). SYMPATIK members have never been allowed to carry weapons, and they have never wanted to cultivate a militaristic image. They just want to be a logistics sub-committee. They consider themselves a different kind of organization from other party "satgas"; they are a "modern" organization.

To join SYMPATIK, a man must first be a PAN member, then pass a physical fitness test. SYMPATIK members are all volunteers; they receive no pay. They are

dedicated party members who want to help the party by doing a little extra work, no different from the members that brought snacks to the meeting.

As people that are especially active party members, SYMPATIK members have do contribute to party debate more than rank-and-file members, but not by virtue of being in SYMPATIK. Pak Rudi likened SYMPATIK to just a logistics office, just a sort of sub-committee in the party. They have offices organized down to the kecamatan level.

SYMPATIK's two jobs are protecting Amien Rais' person and to collaborate with the police to make sure party events go smoothly. Also, on the small scale, SYMPATIK members should also help publicize party activities by calling their local offices.

Between 1999 and 2004, SYMPATIK made a few reforms structurally and financially. When the party was first started, SYMPATIK did not have very good vertical coordination; for a large area such as a kapubaten in a large province there might only be one coordinator. Now, however, there are local coordinators. Next, Pak Rudi admitted (as though it was a sin) that in 1999 SYMPATIK sometimes worked privately for money. Now that is forbidden.

As our interview ended, the party meeting inside the room began. We moved outside, and chatted with the other SYMPATIK members for a moment. This was SYMPATIK in action, "guarding a party meeting". They stood in small groups,

smoking a little. It was a quiet evening. No threat seemed to overhang the meeting that night. One of the men asked me if I was a professor, and I told him not yet. He had just gotten his first professorship at a local university, and like any academic in the world, commenced to tell me about his research.

This interview with Pak Rudi was most illuminating as a contrast with the other two satgas. He had little to say about elan, spirit or organizational history. He kept emphasizing the modern and non-militaristic character of his organization. In fact, I have found very little evidence of SYMPATIK, or even PAN supporters being involved in violence or property destruction in Yogyakarta.

Polri

To hear the official government position on satgas parpol, I made an appointment with the police Commissioner in Yogyakarta in charge of coordinating the satgas with police activities for July 1, 2004.

When I arrived at the police station in central Yogyakarta, a ceremony was taking place to announce promotions in the department. The police officers looked like military police to me in boots and fatigue-like uniforms. They stood in ranks with their wives in a separate formation – each wife was wearing an identical pink suit, the uniform of the police wives' organization.

The ceremony broke up, and I went inside, asked for Pak Sumitro; a young officer led me through a dusty courtyard, past a roomful of men practicing martial arts, and into the tiny anteroom of the commissioner's office. And I started waiting. A friendly clerk came in and I told him I had an appointment. He said Pak Sumitro would arrive shortly. And I waited. Eventually a harried, irritated looking Pak Sumitro came in and said he had no appointment with me. My translator, however, talked him into giving a half hour to someone who came from so far away to talk to him. Begrudgingly, Pak Sumitro opened his office door and said he would take a few questions. But he asked a few questions first.

He asked my name and my addresses in Singapore, in the United States and in Indonesia. He asked for proof that I was a student with permission to research in Indonesia. He took a picture of me without asking! But finally he relaxed some and let me ask a few questions.

Pak Sumitro has worked with Polri since 1984. He started specifically working with satgas in 1990. This surprised me. I would have thought that the police would not want to coordinate with private security; that the police would see satgas as encroachers and amateurs. However, he said the police have always been happy to work with the satgas.

Pak Sumitro said that structurally, most satgas are similar. They are organized parallel to government structure from generally the DIY provincial level down to the

kelurahan level. Small parties may omit some levels or divisions. Each party has a satgas, and each party has its own ways of choosing satgas members. Being a satgas member is not permanent, a satgas member can always quit, but he cannot be expelled on a leader's whim; he must break a rule before he can be told to leave. The satgas members also work solely as volunteers. Pak Sumitro likened them to supporters of a football team.

Pak Sumitro believes that satgas parpol are responsible for electoral violence. He argues that the parties cannot control the satgas, and thus the satgas do things (such as carry weapons) that the parties do not condone but are powerless to check. Thus, violent acts *are associated with* the parties, but in fact the parties are not in control. However, he does say that the police have a harmonious working relationship with the satgas. At party activities, the police watch the satgas and the satgas takes care of the people. This fits with Pak Seno's comment that the people do not trust the police and would rather see the satgas.

In Yogyakarta, Pak Sumitro agrees that the elections are safer and more calm than during Orba because the people are now more aware of laws and proper political practice and are more able to accept differences. Furthermore, the people are now aware that they themselves posses the city, so now they obey the rules.

At this point our interview was ended; however, Pak Sumitro's most important argument is that the satgas are *not* under the control of the parties. He argues that

even now, they still act autonomously. However, all the satgas had argued that they are strictly under party control, but it is only renegade cadres that cause trouble. Furthermore, there is the idea that the troublemakers are not even satgas members; they might just be unbalanced party supporters.

Pak Sumitro compared party supporters to football team supporters. This analogy is apt on many levels. First, it illustrates that supporting a political party in Yogya for many people is something like supporting the local football team. It's not an intellectual activity – its something done for fun. Second, like football supporters, some party supporters can become too fierce and have to be dealt with by the police. Third, football supporters often choose their team on qualities other than players' skill. Maybe his family or most of his neighbors are dedicated to one team; or perhaps he picks an underdog. Finally, like football supporters, Indonesian party supporters like to have a party. Just as some football fans paint themselves different colors and camp outside of the stadium before a match, some party supporters in Indonesia also paint themselves and organize parades through the streets, in the *pesta democrasi*. However, the analogy breaks down when we want to distinguish between simple party supporters and satgas parpol. Football teams have nothing like paramilitary supporters/guards that provide security to the team. The team would hire

Illustration 4: PDI-P Satgas in Surabaya, June 6, 2003. Photo by liputan6.com

private security for that.

From these interviews we can draw a few conclusions about post-Suharto satgas.

First, the satgas of new parties are less militant than old parties' satgas. Though PDI-P and PPP satgas leaders say they reject militaristic uniforms, for example, we can still see them in other parts of the country. SYMPATIK's uniform, however, is hardly militaristic. SYMPATIK refuses to even use the satgas name. SYAMPATIK seems to have less of a reputation for carrying weapons[44]. In 2004, there were at least two incidents of PDI-P (*SM*, March 18, 2004) and PPP (*JP,* March 28, 2004) supporters bringing weapons to party rallies in Yogyakarta, but I found no examples of PAN members being arrested for that offence. King (2000: 52) also notes that unlike in other parties, SYMPATIK only takes orders from the party's executive board; the head of SYMPATIK in each district is formally and actually subordinate to non-SYMPATIK party members. King notes that the system has no dwifungsi (see p. 76). SYMPATIK cadres and leaders are ultimately subordinate to, not equal to, their non-SYMPATIK counterparts. Furthermore, because they are strictly hierarchically organized, SYMPATIK units do not cooperate horizontally, just as two units in an Army do not cooperate horizontally unless ordered to by a higher commanding officer. In the case of SYMPATIK, the ultimate "commanding officer" is a non-SYMPATIK person. PPP and PDI-P do not have such a strict vertical command;

[44] This applies only to DIY / Yogyakarta; in other regions, it seems to be less true. See "Poso's PAN Chairman Denies Possession of Bomb Ingredients" (*JP*, May 8, 2004) for some allegations that later proved true.

local leaders often coordinate among themselves. Thus, if party leaders are serious about curbing violence, they will do well to divide the satgas into "companies" that do not coordinate with each other.

Though it is clear that in Yogyakarta the 1999 and 2004 election campaigns were much more peaceful than previous campaigns, it is still unclear who, if anyone, could stop campaign violence. If we believe the police, the satgas are not under the control of the party in reality – and thus the satgas do as they want. If we believe the satgas, then only a few rowdy party supporters (who are not necessarily satgas) act independently and cause trouble. The cause lies between the two answers. Whether or not the satgas are under party control or not is unimportant; a party could convince its cadres to use violence (as satgas PPP admittedly in their interview that did during Orba). Indonesians under the age of forty had had no experience of politics except coercion under Orba; the peace and tolerance preached under Reformasi is a new concept which may take time to spread to cadres and parties both. Thus, I do not think "strong party control" is the sole solution to political violence. Furthermore, as tight a screening as the parties may have for satgas candidates, some fanatics, paranoiacs, or simply young men with a "pemuda consciousness" could get into the organization and start carrying a weapon. As quoted above, Amien Rais said rather dismissively that the biggest problem of violence in the 2004 elections would be some uncontrollable young people fighting in the street. And in Yogyakarta, his prediction was true; however, one would like to know how to stop people from fighting in the street. Also, satgas and party cadres have a bad reputation among

some Yogyanese. The people from the neighborhood in which I lived in Yogya universally revile satgas and wild campaigning for the noise, trouble, and fright they cause. Frightening campaigning is not proper and should be stopped. However, neither the parties nor the satgas can control this Indonesian tradition (p. 46) of some youths acting fanatically in politics.

However, there is also evidence that at least satgas leadership is willing to participate in peace initiatives. In January 2004, the satgas of all major parties in Yogyakarta attended a meeting held by the city mayor and head of the police to meet each other and plan peaceful resolutions to problems (*Kompas*, January 12, 2004). Even earlier, in 1999, all city satgas agreed to a nondenominational prayer meeting as a place to pray for peace and also build trust in each other (*Jateng Pos*, November 1, 1999).

One reason why the violence is declining is perhaps because satgas leaders and some cadres are unwilling to be violent – they are taking Reformasi peace rhetoric to heart. One of the structural prerequisites to violence mentioned in Chapter one is youths willing to do this violent work. But given all the talk of a cleaner political system after Orba, it seems some men in Yogya are at least giving the new system a chance and trying to work with each other peacefully. Indeed, the vote-counting I witnessed in Yogyakarta was exceedingly civil and friendly; monitors from different parties sat by each other chatting. If post-Reformasi Indonesia can deliver some economic growth, perhaps people will learn to have enough faith in this system to forget about using violence in politics.

Many people have called for disbanding the satgas as a way to end political violence; this is an excellent idea, however, I do not think this is the complete solution to political violence. First, as I argued above, I am not convinced that the satgas *per se* are the cause of the violence. Finally, I am not convinced that the parties can or would disband their satgas. For example, PAN denounces the old order and militarism, so it is not clear why they would have a satgas. Also, satgas do provide useful services in crowd control and form a buffer between the people and the hated police. Most difficult to understand, but perhaps most importantly is a "satgas tradition". Pak Sulaeman of PPP mentioned at the closing of our interview that a party with no satgas makes no sense because satgas give parties their "color". I cannot say that I appreciate what he means by "color", but I do understand that he means satgas are an integral part of a party's personality, not just its structure.

Furthermore, Pramono (2001) argues that a militia is not bad *per se*, because many are deployed on humanitarian operations and do social work. He suggests, rather, that militias be barred from supporting political parties. This idea is praiseworthy, but it is not practical because political satgas feel they *must* be involved in politics.

Conclusion

From these interviews we can see the difference between the satgas of old parties and new ones. The lack of institutional history in PAN satgas seems to be a major difference between them and satgas PPP and PDI-P. The leadership of the satgas of

old parties that I talked to say that they are moving towards modernization. It is yet unclear if the old parties really will modernize, or if they can modernize – organizational inertia in the satgas may be too much. Political violence cannot be ended simply by disbanding the satgas; they are too much of an institution in Indonesian political parties to be closed down now. Besides that, it is difficult to believe that either the satgas or the parties could control the cadres.

First Round of the Presidental Election: July 5, 2004

Photo by: Maggie Lee

Illustration 5: A happy voter

Each polling place served between about 200 and 300 voters. The guards in the background are non-partisan Abri guards. Two Abri or Polri officers were present at each polling place. At the higher-level vote-tallying centers, there were progressively more officers.

Province: DIY
Kabupaten: Sleman
Kecamatan: Godean
Kelurahan: Sumbersari
Polling Station (TPS): 03

Photo by: Maggie Lee

Illustration 6: Kids at a polling station

A village public building becomes a polling place. The man at the desk checks the voters' registration cards before they go in to vote. Early in the morning, the chairs had been set out to accommodate the long line. The kids, meanwhile, are learning to use their franchise.

Province: DIY
Kabupaten: Sleman
Kecamatan: Godean
Kelurahan: Sumbersari
Polling Station (TPS): 05

Conclusion

The primary focus of this thesis has been to examine the role of satgas parpol in Indonesian politics. This study has aimed to uncover the origins of satgas in Indonesia, and in Yogyakarta in particular, the reasons why parties use satgas, and changes in satgas operations since Reformasi. Certainly law-enforcement and economic problems have helped explain the the phenomenon of satgas parpol. Indonesia remains underpoliced, and the people generally do not trust the police to do anything about community problems. Furthermore, as unemployment in Indonesia remains high, the few perks one can get from joining a satgas are attractive. This confirms what Robinson (1995) found in interviews with Bali satgas members. For example, he revealed that satgas provided a small insurance program that was attractive to many members. Even small networking opportunities are a reason why men would join satgas, even if the job involves some violence.

However, in this thesis, I have argued that the satgas phenomenon also has to be examined from a historical perspective. In order to understand why neither old parties nor modern post-Reformasi parties disband their unpopular satgas, it is necessary to understand the history of political militias in Indonesia. Not only is being a satgas cadre an attractive proposition for many unemployed young men. And not only do corrupt or understaffed police fail to suppress them. But also, joining a satgas is a way of expressing one's "pemuda consciousness". Once in the organizations, especially those of the older parties, one absorbs a sort of organizational pride or élan which one is loathe to lose. Thus, the satgas

organizations have a sort of life of their own which can not be easily suppressed. Parties also have satgas for "color" and appearance. For a presidential candidate in Indonesia today, a few satgas members in uniform are as much a part of the entourage as campaign advisors and strategists. The satgas members in uniform add to the "pesta demokrasi" atmosphere at campaign time. They are unusual, dressed strangely, and acting a role. The satgas are not festive, but they are always present at the festivities, someone to curse at, or smile at, depending on one's point of view. Furthermore, in a country where the police are understaffed and unpopular, parties indeed need some professionals to provide security. It is common to see pictures where satgas form a human barrier between a popular politician and mobbing supporters. At rallies, satgas work help keep crowds within bounds. At party meetings, satgas keep out splinter groups or ousted members.

However, the "color" aspect of satgas goes beyond simple appearances – it is something hinted at by Pak Sulaeman's comment that a party with no satgas makes no sense. It is something I cannot explain, though it exists. It helps explain why a modern party like PAN would even have satgas, watered down though they are. Satgas are somehow part of Indonesian parties; perhaps something like mascots or talismans.

Little analysis has yet been done about changes in satgas post-1998, so this case is also a sort of case study of post-Reformasi satgas in Yogyakarta. In DIY, especially the city of Yogyakarta, satgas and politicking have become less violent since

Reformasi. This is because political education seems to be more advanced in the city. The Sultan, a unique and revered figure, calls for calm. Universities, think-tanks, and civil society groups preach a message of tolerance. Yogya residents are a diverse bunch from all over Indonesia and the world; they are already rather socialized to living together. Many Yogyanese are proud to be from such a fine city and want to set a good example by being peaceful. Thus, political violence is becoming socially unacceptable very quickly.

From my interviews, it is clear that the satgas of PDI-P, PPP and PAN are aware of the change in political expectations since Reformasi. Citizens are ready for paramilitarism to be eradicated. Satgas PAN (SYMPATIK), formed in 1998, was never a militaristic organization in the first place. It is little more than a party subcommittee. The satgas of PPP and PDI-P, veterans of Orba, both see themselves as retired revolutionaries. Orba's repression of citizens' basic freedoms were an important cause of all kinds of violence in Indonesia. This fits with Collins' (2002) argument attributing violence throught Indonesia to Orba's example and tactics. Indeed, these satgas sy that frustration made them take up weapons.

Satgas leaders belivable argue that they no longer accept fighting as a means of political expression. They claim they want to be simple security guards and public servants. The leaders of satgas PPP and PDI-P kept repeating that they want to "socialize" their members and make them into community-minded volunteers.

My impression from field interviews is that satgas leadership probably does genuinely want peace; and they periodically have confidence-building meetings to meet each other. Indeed, there has been no party-rivalry related death in the city of Yogyakarta since perhaps 2002. However, cadres are still caught carrying weapons, sometimes in large enough amounts to imply much coordination.

Meeting satgas leaders convinced me that there are elements in each party that do want peaceful politicking. From my research, I believe that most incidents of weapons-carrying and property destruction are perpetrated by deviant party supporters, be they satgas members or not. Parties seem to sometimes let preman elements into satgas; after all, no one is barred from political opinions. However, I think the satgas are genuinely interested in helping their members reform if they need to. To that end, PPP puts its satgas members through religious training, and PDI-P use gentle persuasion to try to reform their comrades.

However, I also realized that satgas of old parties especially have a strong corporate identity. Satgas do not want to be disbanded, parties do not want to disband them, so they will exist into the forseeable future. Yogyakarta will remain peaceful, however, because of its special political culture. Furthermore, satgas are not responsible for every knife-carrying incident or damaged car during a campaign; some of the problem is with fanatic cadres. However, as long as people have any reason to feel scared of satgas, they are inappropriate in politics. Fear has no place in politicking. Satgas leaders say they want to evolve into groups that all citizens can trust. In the

parties, perhaps they could evolve into simply symbolic leaders. If satgas will not be disbanded, this is the second best option.

Civil society groups have called for the parties to discipline their satgas. It is unclear who exactly controls the satgas; there is no sure rule. Satgas PAN in Yogya are under the control of the party. Both satgas PPP and PDI-P claim that they are under party control, but their organizations' history and esprit de corps seems to beggar that argument. Pak Sumitro of the Yogya city police said that the satgas are categorically not under party control; that they act as they want. The satgas claim that the only problems are caused by rogue cadres that refuse to take party orders. Thus, I heard three different theories from three different sources. I conclude that the parties are all different. Some satgas are controlled by the parties and some are not. There is no generalization I can make about who controls the satgas.

Prospects for Peace

More likely though, politicking throughout Indonesia may come to resemble that of Thailand Thai vote-delivery has become very monitized; local notables or citizens themselves are often paid to vote a certain way. According to McVey (2000) physical coercion happens less and less often. This has happened because the sponsors of the violence, the *chao pho* or political fixers have realized that simple payment works more easily than coercion. So, there are still sponsors, but they no longer sponsor violence, they sponsor payments.

However, unlike Thailand, Indonesian incomes are low and unemployment is high. As long as unemployment remains high in Indonesia, there will be young men willing to rent themselves out as a mob. This may continue to be the more cost-effective solution for vote-delivery in Indonesia. Economic growth and equality will prevent a large part of political violence.

The Philipines' anti-Communist militias had a specific enemy and have not remained active in politics; thus, we learn from them that Southeast Asian societies are not inherently violent or disorderly. The violence can have an end. Kerkvliet and Mojares (1991) documented peaceful political life in two Philippino towns. They also note that as communities become larger and more diverse, patron-client relationships in politics decline. It is no longer possible for one man of prowess to deliver goods. Capitalistic exchange is easier for everyone. If Indonesia follows the Philippines example, it will be through the practice of vote-buying, rather than vote-bullying. Capitalism is working its way into the political facet of life.

To try to predict if Indonesia will follow a path of money politicking like the Philippines and Thailand, a case study could be made among comparable cities in the three countries. If we look at the development of politicking in the Philippines since 1986 or Thailand since 1992, we could look for similarities in post-Reformasi period in Indonesia. Or, to see if a positive political culture can overcome money politicking, a comparasion could be made among Yogyakarta and comparable cities in the Philippines or Thailand.

Earlier I argued that one of the prerequisities to politicial violence are willing sponsors and willing workers. Thus, the greatest break in the cycle of political violence will come when elite politicians and satgas members (or just fanatic supporters) no longer accept violence in politics. Though poverty and unemployment make a job even as a thug look appealing, poverty is no barrier to peace.

A tourism official in Yogya has suggested election season become a tourist attraction where party supporters can compete artistically for the most outlandish and interesting party display (Kompas, January 12, 2004). This political Carnivale or Mardi Gras would be an excellent idea. The students would still be able to stop traffic, make noise and revel for a few days, though there would still be the problem of violence, as any police officer in Rio de Janeiro or New Orleans could attest.

Political education and positive examples of civil politicking will make the end come sooner. From a young age, parents and teachers must make children take it for granted that political changes are made by debate, voting, and some festive campaigning, not by fighting. However, many Indonesian children are not wealthy enough to have much formal education. So they, and their parents, must learn from examples. These examples should accumulate with time. Not only were the 2004 national elections rather peaceful, but they were family events in Yogya. I visited four polling stations in the city of Yogyakarta and Sleman, and there were children

hanging around and playing at each one. During the vote counting, they clapped with their parents when the results were tabulated and certified.

Illustration 7: The headline of the Yogyakarta paper, *Kedaulatan Rakyat,* on July 6, the day after the election. It says "Peaceful Presidental Election". The election in Yogya was peaceful, but there are still problems with intimidation, thugs, and property destruction in the district.

Kedaulatan Rakyat

Suara Hati Nurani Rakyat

Terbit Sejak 27 September 1945

Penghitungan suara di TPS 08 Ndalem Jayakusuman Kelurahan Pancuran Tegal. Tampak dalam gambar para petugas KPPS berpakaian Jawa.

SB YUDHOYONO-KALLA SEMENTARA UNGGUL

Pemilu Presiden Aman

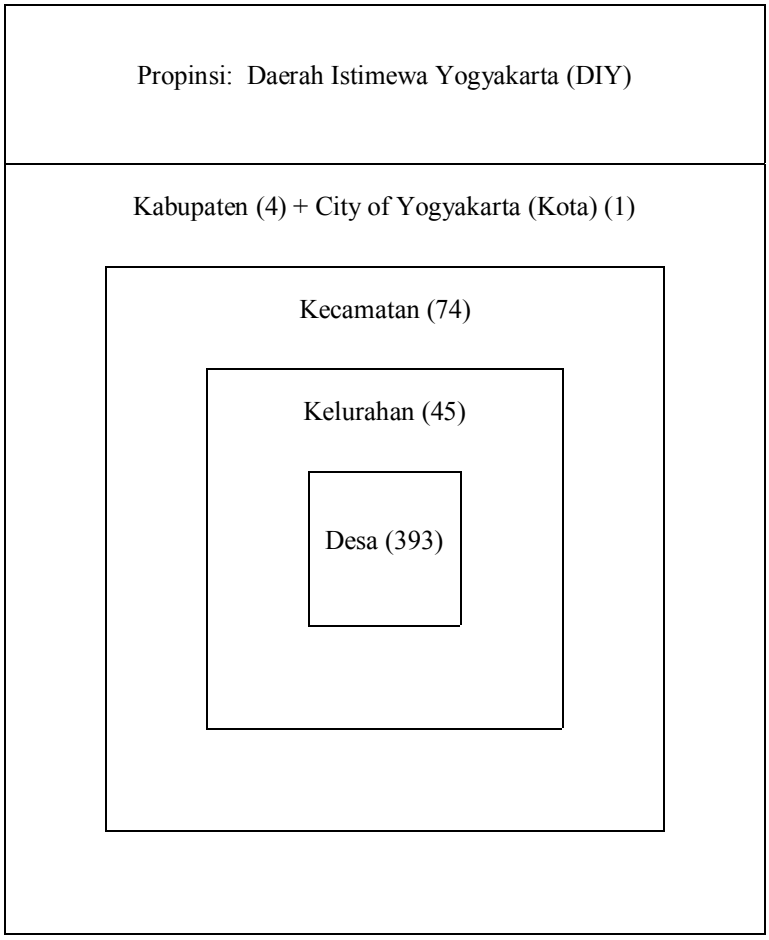
JAKARTA (KR) - Secara umum pelaksanaan pemilihan presiden (pilpres) yang digelar serentak di tanah air, Senin (5/7) berjalan aman dan lancar. ... tgan perolehan suara 1.182.214 (32,94%) disusul berturut-turut Mega-Hasyim 978.100 (27,26%), Wiranto-Gus Solah 803.181 (22,62%), Amien-Sa... di TPS tempat capres-cawapres mencoblos, hasilnya bervariasi. Tidak seluruh calon presiden berhasil mengumpulkan perolehan di TPS tempat mereka ... nang mutlak di TPS 46, Kebagusan, Jakarta Selatan, tempat Megawati Soekarnoputri dan keluarganya memberikan hak pilihnya. Di tempat ini ... Selah 29 suara, dan Hamzah Haz-Agum 4 suara.

Pasangan Hamzah-Agum mampu mengunggul suara terbanyak di TPS 30 Tegalan, Ja...

Yogyakarta is likely to continue on a more peaceful path. The city is lucky enough to have a popular, trusted public figure in Sultan Hamengkubuwono X. It is a relatively small but diverse and dynamic city, in which people are proud of the uniqueness of their city. They feel they own their city, as Pak Sumitro observed during our interview. Thus, political socialization is faster and political education is more

widespread in Yogya than in the rest of the country. Eventually Indonesia's politics will become mostly peaceful, but it will be a longer process than in Yogyakarta.

Table 3: Levels of Local Government in Indonesia



Within the province of DIY, there are 4 large divisions called **kabupaten,** and one smaller division for the city of Yogyakarta. Within the kapubaten and the city, there are 74 smaller divisions called **kecamatan**. Within the kecamatan are **kelurahan**, and the kelurahan are split into villages called **desa**.

Appendix A: Glossary

AMS: *Angkatan Muda Siliwangi*, "The Siliwangi Young Generation", a West Java satgas associated with Golkar

Bromotjorah: A general term in East Java for gangs.

Golkar: The Indonesian government's political party from the late 1960s until 1998. It is still a viable party today despite its negative image from Orba.

Jago: An Indonesian village bully.

Laskyar: A paramilitary group with an Islamic ideology.

Orba: *Ordre Baru*, "New Order", the term for Suharto's government from 1965 until 1998.

PAN: *Partai Amanat Nasional*, the "National Mandate Party". A modernist Muslim party founded in 1998 and headed by Amien Rais. It is more popular in Yogyakarta than in the rest of Indonesia.

PD: *Partai Demokrat*, the "Democratic Party". A secular party founded in 1998, and the party of Indonesia's current president, Susilio Bambang Yudyohono.

PDI, PDI-P: *Partai Demokrat Indonesia* and *Partai Demokrat Indonesia – Perjuangan*. The "Indonesian Democratic Party" and the "Indonesian Democratic Party Struggle Faction". These are the pre- and post- 1996 names of a major secular nationalist party in Indonesia. It is Megawati's party.

PNI: *Partai Nasional Indonesia*, the "Indonesian National Party". The name of the main pre-Orba nationalist party. It was later forcibly merged with Christian parties to form PDI.

Pemuda: Collective noun meaning "youth".

Pesta Demokrasi: "Democratic Festival", the festive campaigning for an election.

PKB: *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*, the "National Awakening Party", a traditional Islamist party.

PKI: *Partai Komunis Indonesia*, the "Indonesian Communist Party", which was very strong in Indonesia until the massacre of 1965-66.

PPP: *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*, the "United Development Party". A party formed by the forced amalgamation of Islamic parties in 1973.

Preman, Premanisme: A thug, and thuggish behavior.

Reformasi: "Reform", the most popular slogan of Indonesia's democratic Revolution in 1998.

Satgas Parpol: *Satuan Tugas Partai Politik*, "political party task force".

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